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SOME ASPECTS OF PANDYAN HISTORY IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT DISCOVERIES

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Sri S. Subramania Ayyar Endowment Lectures 1971-72



by

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**SOME ASPECTS OF PANDYAN HISTORY IN THE LIGHT OF
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Dr K. V. RAMAN

INTRODUCTION

The Pandyas were one of the oldest royal lines to have ruled in the Tamil country. Probably, they have also the longest and most continuous history right from the Sangam period upto even the 16th century. The Cholas and the Cheras, though equally old, had long and intermittant breaks. For instance, the Chola dynasty after its initial glory during the Sangam Age, was out of the foot-lights of history during the 5th to 8th centuries and it had a revival only in the middle of the 9th century A.D. under the famous Vijayalaya. Again, after a spell of glorious rule for four centuries, they fell from power towards the end of the 13th century, after which almost nothing was heard about them.

But the Pandyas, except for the brief period of the Kalabhra interregnum, occupied the political stage continuously almost upto the modern times. Even while the Pandyan kingdom came under the control of the Cholas, the Pandyan rulers rose from time to time with the banner of revolt and succeeded in reviving it soon. Similarly, in the midst of adverse circumstances when Madurai was occupied by the Sultans in the beginning of the 14th century, the Pandyan rulers shifted their capital to Tenkasi and Tirunelveli and continued to rule till the 17th century. In short, theirs is a long record of an unbroken rule in Tamil Nadu, unique in the annals of any ruling dynasty of the world.

Yet, paradoxically, their history is perhaps the briefest that is available to us today. The pioneering work of the doyens of epigraphy and history like Venkayya and K. V. Subramania Aiyar, Harihara

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Aiyar, Kanakasabai Pillai, T. A. Gopinatha Rao, L. D. Swamikkannu Pillai, C. R. Krishnamacharlu and others, did the spade work and collected valuable information from epigraphy and literature. Prof. K. A. Nilakanta [Sastri's celebrated work *The Pandyan Kingdom* published in 1929, represents the best outcome of all the data that was available at that time. It was indeed a challenging task to write a connected history of the Pandyas especially because of the well known difficulties involved in the task such as their practice of adopting the same names and titles alternately by the kings, co-regencies, the peculiar method of dating adopted in their records etc. The history of the Second Pandyan empire i.e., from the accession of Jatavarman Kulasekhara I (A.D. 1190) is very well documented. But, for the earlier history, the records were limited, in sharp contrast to the records that were available for the Pallavas. Still, with the data available, Prof. Sastri has given us a connected account for the period. But that was in 1926, almost half a century ago! From then on, several hundreds of inscriptions of the Pandyas have been reported which have given us new and additional material for writing the political and cultural history of the Pandyas. Thanks to the intensive exploration and coverage done by the Epigraphical Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India, almost every temple in Pandya Nadu has been covered and their inscriptions therein have been reported. We must also be thankful to the Epigraphical Department for publishing a volume entitled "*Pandyan Inscriptions*" in their series South Indian Inscriptions Vol. XIV, where they have published the originals of all the reported inscriptions of the Pandyas upto the time of Jat. Srivallabha (early 12th century). This is an important source material for the Pandyan history which has not been made full use of by the scholars so far.

The discovery of two copper plate inscriptions viz., the Dalavay-puram copper plate and the Sivakasi copper plate is another important addition to our knowledge on the subject. They furnish many hitherto unknown facts on Pandyan genealogy and other related aspects. They have been briefly reported in Epigraphical Reports for the years 1958-59 and 1960-61. The full texts of the two copper plates have been published by T. N. Subramaniam in the Journal of Archl. Society and later by *Tamil Varalatra Kazhagam* in their *Pandiyar Seppedugal*. Equally valuable is the volume on the inscriptions of Kanyakumari

District published recently by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamil Nadu. *South Indian Temple Inscriptions* — published by the late lamented Epigraphist, Shri T. N. Subramaniam gives the originals of several Pandyan inscriptions. Dr. K. K. Pillay's "*Sucindram Temple*" and Sadasiva Pandarattar's *Pandiar Varalaru* give the contents of some unpublished Pandyan inscriptions. The contributions of the epigraphists like the late A. S. Ramanatha Aiyar and Shri K. G. Krishnan in the volumes of *Epigraphia Indica* give valuable information on the new inscriptions of the Pandyas.

The Temple Survey Project of the Archaeological Survey of India undertook a survey of all the rock-cut cave temples of the Pandyas and a full volume has been prepared by Shri K. V. Soundara Rajan with detailed drawings and photographs, awaiting publication.

The above facts are only selected examples to show how the evidences are growing on the subject and it will be worthwhile to take stock of the developments. This is what I propose to do in these lectures. I have gone through all the inscriptions that have come to light since 1929, both stone and copper-plate and have endeavoured to discuss the more important ones under appropriate heads. This will help to highlight the importance of the evidences and draw the attention of scholars to undertake further work in the field. I have also taken stock of the discoveries in the related fields — like numismatics, architecture and iconography.

I have divided my lectures under two headings — in the first lecture I will discuss the importance of recent discoveries relating to political and administrative aspects and in the second lecture, I propose to discuss the social, economic and cultural aspects.

LECTURE I

POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

A. POLITICAL

Among the recent discoveries relating to the earlier history of the Pandyas, I have to mention the valuable contributions made by Sri Iravatham Mahadevan in the reading of the Brahmi inscriptions which cluster round the Pandyan country. His readings have enabled us to recover the hitherto unknown or less known names and

words. Several names of villages, towns, kings, chieftains and dynasties, merchant classes have come to full light. We are able to identify the name of the celebrated Pandyan king Nedunjchelian in the two inscriptions found at Mangulam — perhaps the earliest epigraphical evidence on a Pandyan king. It mentions the gift of the cave by one Catikan, the brother-in-law (or Salakan) of Nedunjchelian. Another inscription records the gift to the same cave by Katalan Valuttiyan, an officer of Nedunjchelian. The suffix *valuti* is a characteristic appellation of the Pandyas. Their donation to the Jain monasteries is noteworthy. The inscription at Pillaiyarpatti in Ramanathapuram Dt. mentions one Peru Paranan, the chieftain of Erukkattor. The Brahmi inscription recently discovered by me and my friend Y. Subbarayalu at Arittapatti very near Mangulam records the gift of a Pandyan chieftain by name Chajivan Adanan Veljyan to a local Jain cave.¹

Besides the names of the kings and chieftains of Pandya Nadu, the early Brahmi inscriptions furnish us with valuable information regarding the state of Jainism in Pandya Nadu, the various towns and ports, the merchantclasses and guilds etc., which I will discuss in a later context.

1. Two important discoveries relating to the Pandyan history are the inscriptions found at Malayadikkuruchchi in Tirunelveli district and the Vaigai bed at Madurai in 1959 and 1961 respectively. Both apparently belong to one and the same king Maran Seliyan Sendan.² The Malayadikkurichchi inscription is in the mixed Tamil and Vatteluttu characters of the 7th century and it is dated 17th regnal year of Maran Sendan whose rule commenced probably in A. D. 653. This inscription which is found in the rock-cut cave temple is now the earliest among the Pandyan inscriptions so far available. It records the founding of the cave by one officer under the orders of the Pandyan king. This incidentally helps us to identify a well dated Pandyan cave, ascribable to the 7th century A. D. This point will be adverted to by me in a later context.

1 K. V. Raman and Y. Subbarayalu: "A New Tamil Brahmi inscription from Arittapatti", *Araichi*, December '71.

2 ARE, 1959-60, p. 358.

The other inscription of Sendan was found accidentally in the bed of the Vaigai river at Madurai. I had the chance to notice this first. It was used by a washerman for washing the clothes. After seeing the early character of this I arranged to remove the stone to a safer place and advised the washerman not to misuse it. Later Shri K. G. Krishnan, Superintendent for Epigraphy, Govt. of India, arranged to take estampages and report it in the official bulletin.³ The inscription both palaeographically and historically is a valuable record. The Sanskrit portion of the text is written in grantha and the Tamil portion in Vatteluttu characters. The verse form of the text anticipates the *Meykkirithi* so popular in later times. The style of text is reminiscent of the later *manipravala* style.

The inscription is dated in the 50th regnal year of Sendan, who is identified with Seliyan Vanavan Sendan, mentioned in the Velvikkudi grant. So far, only his name was known to us. Now, through this inscription we get to know many of his achievements, hitherto unknown to us. It states that Sendan performed many charitable deeds like the *Hiranyagarbha*, *Tulabhara* and other *maha-danas* founded the city of Mangalapura (where his grandson fought with the Maharathas) and constructed a sluice to the Vaigai river and named it as *Arikesariyan*, evidently after his successor and heir-apparent Arikesari. It may be remembered that the Velvikkudi grant also mentions Mangalapura as the place where Sendan's grandson Kochchadaiyan Ranadhiran fought with the Mahrathas or the Chalukyas. The identification of Mangalapura was eluding us. Now, according to the Vaigai bed inscription, it was founded by the Pandyan king Sendan and so the place can be with more justification identified with Mangalam, on the northern bank of Kollidam in Tiruchchirapalli district. The two Chalukyan invasions of the Tamil country took place in A. D. 634-35 and 674 which brought them so far as the Kaveri and it is quite likely that they wanted to capture Mangalapuram, which was founded by the Pandyan king Sendan.

Shri K. G. Krishnan identifies this king with Sendan mentioned in the *Muthollayiram* and also in the *payiram* of *Culamani*.⁴ The name of

³ ARE, 1961-62, p. 14-15.

⁴ K. G. Krishnan: *Some Recent Discoveries in Pandyan History*, paper read in Pandyan Seminar, 1970.

Arikesari, son of Sendan is immortalised in the *Pandikkovai*. Sinna-manur plates inform us that the village was known as Arikesari nallur.

2. *Tirupparankunram inscription of Varaguna I*

Two important inscriptions with dates in Kali Era have been discovered at Tirupparankunram — one is in Sanskrit found on the lintel of the Durga shrine and the other in Tamil and Vatteluttu characters found on one of the pillars of the cave.⁵ Both of them in Kali 3874 in the 6th year of Maranjadaian, mention his military general Samantan Ganapathi who excavated the caveshrine for Siva and a tank. His wife excavated the shrines for Durga and Jyesthadevi. The Kali date enables us to fix the date of the inscription as A. D. 773-74. This inscription becomes another important land-mark in the chronology of the early Pandyan kings. This date being his 6th regnal year of Maranjadaian (alias Varaguna I), the date of the commencement of his rule may be fixed without doubt as A. D. 767-768.

Samantan Ganapati, the founder of this cave is described as Pandi-Amrita-mangalavaraian and a mahasamantan of the king.

3. *Perumpulli Inscription :*

An early Pandyan inscription discovered at Pērumpulli in Dindigul Taluk in 1955 throws some new light on the history of the area.⁶ It is engraved in the characters of the 9th century. At the beginning it recounts the exploits of members belonging to four successive generations of a family who served the Pandyan kings. They are :—

- 1) Pallivelan
- 2) His son Parantaka-Pallivelan is stated to have completed the Idavai-campaign (*Tattirai*).
- 3) His son Pulla-Nakkan who served Maharaja Sadaiya-Maran in the campaigns of Viliñjam, Idavai and Tirukkudamukku. This king is obviously none other than Sri-Maran Sri Vallabhan, who was the famous hero of these campaigns.

5 K. G. Krishnan: *Two Pandyan Inscriptions from Tirupparankunram*, E. I. XXXVI

6 290 of 1955-56; E. I. XXXII, p. 268.

4) His son Nakkan-Pullan, who rendered many services to Varaguna-Maharaha and a Simhala king is mentioned in this connection.

This interesting record shows how dedicated was this family of heroes who successively served the ruling Pandyan kings. Thus, Nakkan Pullan served King Varaguna II, his predecessor Pulla Nakkan served Sri Maran Sri Vallabhan, the victor of Viliñjam, Idavai etc.; his predecessor Parantaka Palli Velan served under Nedunjadaiya Parantaka.

4. *An Early Pandian hero-stone at Viliñjam :*

An inscription on a stone pillar at Viliñjam and now kept in the Padmanabhapuram Museum bears an inscription of 8th century in Vatteluttu and records the death of a hero on the occasion of the capture of Viliñjam.⁷ The hero is stated to have discharged his debt (*Senjorruṇṇungadan*) by giving up his life for the sake of his master, whose identity is not known. The capture of Viliñjam is mentioned frequently as an important achievement of the Pandyan kings right from the days of Nedunjadaiyan Parantaka. This inscription may well belong to him or his successor Sri Maran Sri Vallabha.⁸

Another inscription from the same place dated 27th year of Maranjadaiyan records that when the Chera forces attacked Karai-kottai Tadam Perumtinai, a Ulvittu-Sevaka, a hero by name Ranakirti of Perumur laid down his life.

5. *Inscription of Srimaran Sri Vallabhan (Acc. A. D. 815)*

An inscription from Erukkangudi is dated 18th year of Nedumaran Sri Vallabha and who won victories in several battles like Kunnur and Singalam.⁹ The king honoured one Etti-Sattan with the title Iruppaikkudi-Kilavan. He came of the family of one poet who had the distinction of being seated on the stone slab (*Sangappalagai*) at Madurai. His various acts of benefaction including irrigation schemes etc., are listed. He was a generous administrator, alive to the needs of the country and the welfare of the people he governed. He constructed two Siva temples and a Jaina palli and excavated two irrigation

7 470 of 1958-59

8 471 of 1958-59

9 334 of 1929-30

tanks called *Tirumaran-eri* and *Tirumal-eri* to improve the water-supply in the usually arid tract of Ramanathapuram.

Srimaran's surname was *Avanipasekharan*. Probably, he issued the coin named *Avanipasekharan-Gulagai*.¹⁰

Srimaran Sri Vallabhan's inscription has been found at Sittannavasal. It states that the village Arrur-Sendamangalam in Tiruchendurtaluk was known *Avanipasekhara-Chaturvedimangalam* after Srimaran.¹¹ Similarly, Sri Vallabha-Valanadu was evidently called after him.¹²

These are some of the facts recently known from inscriptions about Srimaran Sri Vallabhan. But by far, the most valuable records of Pandyan history that have come to light in recent times are the two copper plate grants viz., the Dalavaypuram plates of Vira Narayana and the Sivakasi plates of Vira Pandya.

6. *Dalavaypuram copper plate*

This was accidentally discovered in 1958 while digging the lands belonging to Dalavay family at Dalavaypuram near Koilpatti. The donor of this grant was Parantaka Vira Narayana, son of Srimara Sri Vallabhan and younger brother of Varaguna II. This remarkable copper plate record has furnished very valuable and hitherto unknown details not only about the king who issued it but also about his predecessors. The Sanskrit portion of this grant was composed by one Tamilabhāranan alias Pandi Marayan. Let me give the highlights of the copper plate grant one by one.

(i) First about Kadungon, the founder of the Pandyan empire, it states that he granted the village of Tirumangalam to twelve Brahmins by a copper plate grant. Another similar grant by a king who obtained Siddhi (died) at his residence at Kaludur. These original charters were lost and hence need for a fresh grant.

10 ARE 1929-30, p. 73

11 *Ibid*, p. 74

12 *Ibid*, p. 75

13 ARE 1958-59, pp. 5-6; *Pandiyar Seppedugal* and T. N. Subramaian's article in *Arch. Society Journal*, 1962-65

(ii) Between Kadungon and Jatila Parantak, the charter describes the achievements of the kings such as the victories in the battles at Idaiyarai and Vembaikkudi. The battles of Karuvur and Ānūr, where Jatila Parantaka and his son Srimaran Sri Vallabhan successively defeated the Kadava are known to us for the first time.

(iii) Srimaran's father is mentioned as Jatila Parantaka. In the Sinnamanur bigger plate, he is mentioned as Varaguna. Therefore, we are able to know that they refer to one and the same person i.e., Jatila Parantaka was also called Varaguna. For us, he is Varaguna I.

(iv) For the first time, we are also informed that Srimaran Sri Vallabhan won a victory against the combined forces of his enemies at Kudandai or Kumbakonam. It was a formidable confederacy of several forces, the Cheras, the Cholas, the Kupakas, the Gangas, the Kalingas and the Mahadas. The Pandya king killed the son of Amaravallan at Kudandai.

(v) We get some important information about the next king Varaguna (II), the son and successor of Srimaran Sri Vallabhan and elder brother of Parantaka Vira Narayana, the donor of this grant. We are informed that the elder brother also continued to be the king when this grant was issued in the 45th regnal year of Vir a Narayana. It clearly indicates that the brother had a joint rule at that time. The elder brother Varaguna is described as one steeped in his devotion to Siva. It appears that Varaguna was at that time only a king in name and the *de facto* ruler was Vira Narayana. Hence, the copper plate quotes the regnal year of the younger brother.

Some scholars identify this elder king with Varaguna, eulogised by Manikkavasaga in his *Tirukkovaiyar*.¹⁴ The description of this king in this copper plate as the king "meditating on Siva" is taken as sufficient evidence to settle the date of Manikkavasagar as the contemporary of Varaguna II i.e., the later part of the 9th century A.D. Though this is not improbable, there seem to be certain other difficulties in giving such an early date to Manikkavasagar, who on the grounds of internal evidence and other evidences from Saivite literature, is relegated to a later date.

14 Pandiar Seppedugal, intrn. Contra B. G. L. Swami's paper in J. I. H., No. 148,

(vi) This copper plate for the first time gives some interesting information about the genealogy of Vira Narayana on his mother's side. We are surprised to know that his mother (i.e., Srimaran Sri Vallabhan's wife) was the daughter of Srikanta Chola of Pottappi line in charge of the Tondainadu, the homeland of the contemporary Pallavas. Srikanta is described as a Maharaja-Tondaiyar-kon, Mayilaiyar-kon. Who was this Srikanta and how he could be described as the lord of Tondaimandalam when the Pallavas were ruling over it, are problems which await satisfactory answer. It is possible to identify him with the Telugu Choda king of that name, known to us from the Madras Museum Plates. He ruled in the 9th century and the Telugu Chodas belonged to the Pottappi line.

One important point brought out by this is that the Pandyas had matrimonial relations with the Telugu-Chodas, probably because of their common rivalry with the Pallavas. Hence, the eulogy of Srikanta as the lord of Tondaimandalam in the Pandyan copper plate cannot be taken at its face value. Because of their rivalry with the Pallavas, the Pandyas would not recognise the position of the Pallavas and on the other hand, would praise the Telugu Cholas. Anyway, this aspect needs further consideration.

(vii) The Dalavaypuram copper plates are also important for their account of Viranarayana's exploits which are known to us for the first time. The first victory is stated to be the one gained by him over his elder brother in the battle of Sennilam. Who this brother was, is not known now. He won victories at Kunrai, Pokkarani in West Kongu, Ten-mayal, Venbai, Parantakam etc. He captured Ten-Vilinja-nagar. He destroyed the Kongan at Tenur. He subjugated one Vira Tunga whose identity is not clear. He built numerous temples. He assumed many colourful titles like *Kalippagai* and *Kandarul-kandan* (hero among heroes).

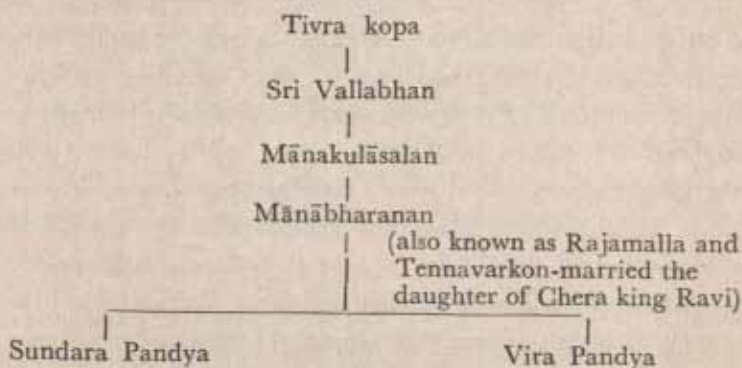
(viii) The copper plate gives some useful information about the village officers, procedure for creating Brahmadeya etc. It is stated that two copper-plates granted by Kadungon earlier were lost during confusion and consequently, the lands were made *kudinilam* i.e., belonging to the ryots. But now, the two villages (Somayajikuruchi and Tirumangalam) were joined and made as one Brahmadeya. This was done on

the suggestion of Narayanan Kesavan, the Padikkaval of the village and a trusted officer of the king.

7. *Sivakasi plates of Vira Pandya :*

Let me now pass on to the other important copper plate, the Sivakasi Plates discovered in 1960. This was issued by Vira Pandya on the occasion of his Brahmadeya gift of a village to a Brahmin Pitambaran in appreciation of his composition of a Sanskrit Prasasti. This was issued in the 3rd year of Vira Pandya (Acc. A. D. 947), while he was camping at the village of Sellur also called Virapandiyapuram.

This copper plate is also of great importance to us as it gives useful and hitherto unknown details on many aspects of Pandyan geneology and history. It introduces new names and relationships. For example, it gives the following geneology.



For the first time, we come across the names Tivra-kopa and Mānakulāsalan as the Pandyan kings. It completely omits the names of such celebrated kings like Nedunjadaiyan Parantaka, the father of Srimaran Sri Vallabhan and also the latter's two famous sons, Varaguna II and Parantaka Vira Narayana. The only explanation is that Sri Vallabhan and his father Tivra-kopa are probably identical with Sri Maran Sri Vallabhan and his father Nedunjadaya Parantaka (Varaguna I). Tivra-kopa is apparently another name for the latter. If we have to go by the known geneology of the Pandyas, we have to equate Manakulachala and his son Manabharana with Parantaka Vira Narayana and his son Rajasimha respectively. Even this would omit Varaguna II. This is the one only plausible way of explaining these sets of geneology. But, there is some room for suspecting that the geneology of Sivakasi plate

may represent a collateral branch of the Pandyan kings. The Dalavaypuram copper plate has informed us that Srimaran's son Varaguna II and Parantaka Vira Narayana ruled the land after defeating their brother whose name has not been disclosed. Could Mānākulasalan of this copper plate, be described as the son of Sri Vallabhan be that person?

Now, let us turn to Vira Pandya, the donor of this grant and his brother Sundara Pandya who are described as the sons of Manābharana, probably through two different wives. The charter does not speak much of Sundara Pandya, the elder brother. Probably, he predeceased Vira Pandya making his way clear to the throne. It has been suggested that *Sundara Pandyesvaram*, the *Pallipadai*, referred to in the records of Solantalai-konda-Vira Pandya, was named after this prince.¹⁵ The Vira Pandya of this charter can be identified with *Solan-talai-Konda Vira Pandya* who, as the name itself shows, was responsible for repulsing the early Chola incursions into the Pandyan country during Parantaka's time but who was later beheaded by the Chola king Aditya II who assumed the title *Vira Pandyan-talai-konda Parakesari*.¹⁶ Some scholars were hesitant for this identification. Now I have picked out a very clinching evidence in favour of this. An inscription discovered recently at Anaiyur near Madurai states that Vira Pandya wrested the kingdom and issued certain order from the seat *Vira-Keralan* in his palace called *Manabharanan-tirumaligai* at Mangalyapuram. This inscription supports the Sivakasi plate evidence with regard to his being the son of a Chera princess and his relation with Manabharana. This evidence would help to identify Vira Pandya with Solantalai-konda Vira Pandya. It may also be pointed out that the names Mānābharanan and Sundara Pandya are mentioned in many 10th cen. inscriptions though they have not left any independent records of their own.¹⁷

15 ARE 1960-61.

16 *Ibid.* But there are some hurdles. His relation with Manabharanan and Sundara are not corroborated. There was one later Vira Pandya. An inscription of Rajendra I refers to the defeat of Vira Pandya and Sundara Pandya at the hands of his son Rajadhiraja I. Here the Vira Pandya's relation with Manabharana and Sundara Pandya are well corroborated and it is possible that Vira Pandya of the Sivakasi plate is the same king. E. I. Vol. XXV; *Pandyan Seppedugal*. But this hurdle no longer holds good now because as pointed out earlier above, Solan-talai-konda Vira Pandya's relation with Manabharana is corroborated by the Anaiyur inscription. His being son of Kerala princess is also supported by his throne being called *Vira Keralan*.

17 E. I. XXVIII, pp. 85 ff.

Vira Pandya, the donor of this grant, is described as the son of a Kerala princess (and daughter of the Chera king Ravi). He had, his coronation performed at *Tamilkkūdal* i.e., Madurai. His minister was Uttaramantri Dramila-maharajan or Tamil-pērariyar, who acted as the executor of the grant. It is interesting to learn that the Pandyan king had an adviser on dharma named *Dharmopadeshta*. Another officer mentioned as the leader of the elephant corps *Gajadhyakshakara* or *Anai-Olukku*.

8. *Some Chera records in Pandya country :*

Recently, a few inscriptions of Chera kings dated to 9th century have been discovered in Kiranur near Palani, and Coimbatore district. In 1964, an epigraph of one Iravi-kandan was found in the local Vagiswaraswami temple dated in his own 2nd regnal year.¹⁸ Two more were found at Ponnivadi in Dharapuram taluk in Coimbatore district—one Vatteluttu and another in Tamil characters, both datable to the beginning of the 9th century. They belong to Kandan-Iravi who is stated to have belonged to the Chandraditya-kula and bore the title Sarvabhauma.¹⁹ At Perur, fragmentary inscriptions mentioning Kandan-Ravi and Ravi-Kandan of the same family are available.²⁰ At Vellalur in the same district is available a record of 2nd year of Iravi-Kandan.²¹

They seem to belong to the Chera line which ruled over the Kongu country in the 9th century and who seem to have made incursions into the borders of Pandya nadu. The conquest of Kongu made by the Pandya kings like Nedunjadaiyan Parantaka and Srimaran Sri Vallabhan and others should have been against these Kongu-Cheras. A Chera prince of this line was a contemporary and subordinate to Chola Parantaka I and called himself Vira-Chola and with his permission issued the Namakkal copper plate grant in which the full geneology of the line is given. The Cheraman Sthanu Ravi figuring in the inscription of Aditya I must have been a later member of this family.²²

18 Indian Archaeology, 1964-65, p. 57

19 ARE, 1961-62, pt. II

20 S. I. I. V, No. 223

21 148 of 1910

22 ARE 1961-62, p. 11

9. *Varaguna II* (Acc. A. D. 862) :

Several important inscriptions of Varaguna II have come to light in the recent years from different parts of Pandya-nadu and also the Chola country. The information furnished by the Dalavaypuram plates has already been given. We will now review the various stone-inscriptions issued in his reign.

Lalgudi record : An important inscription found at Lalgudi in Tiruchi district of Maranjadaian alias Varaguna-Maharaja records a gift made by the Pallava king Tellarerinda Nandippottaraiyan who was none else than the famous Nandivarman III (851-73 A. D). This would clearly clinch their contemporaneity.²³

Thanjavur district : Varaguna's inscriptions found in the heart of the Chola country, clearly prove an interruption in the Pallava supremacy over the tract. About five of his records are available at Tirukkodikkaval and Tiruchchatturai in Thanjavur district. His 11th year record registers a gift of gold by the king for burning lamps in the shrines of Sri, Sarasvati and Ganapati at Tirukkodikkaval.²⁴ At Tiruchchatturai, the king gave 300 *kasu* as endowment.²⁵ His inscriptions dated 10th and 11th year have been found at Tirukkattupalli and Niyamam in Thanjavur district. They mention Videlvidugu-Muttaraiyan who was a feudatory of Pallava Nripatunga Varman.²⁶ Another inscription at Tirugokarnam dated 17th year of Maranjadaian mentions a donor by name Varagunavadirayan.²⁷ All these would prove that the Pandyas under Varaguna II succeeded in wresting the Thanjavur and Tiruchi regions from the hands of the Pallavas. We already know how Varaguna II and his brother Vira Narayanan fought successful battles at Kumbakonam, Venbil, Idavai, etc., all of which lie in Thanjavur district.

But this Pandyan incursions did not go unchallenged. Nripatunga made a bold bid to recapture his possessions. His records appeared in the region soon. His Tiruvadi record would show that Varagnn held

23 ARE 1928-29, p. 66

24 37 of 1930-31.

25 160 of 1930-31.

26 ARE, 1960-61, p. 20

27 311 of 1904.

a subordinate position under him. The Pallavas allied themselves with the Western Gangas and inflicted a crushing blow to the Pandyan forces of Varaguna in the battle of Sripurambiam.

Some more of Varaguna's records have come to light from the Pandyan country from the districts of Tirunelveli and Ramanathapuram. For example, there is one at Dalapati Samudram in Tirunelveli district dated in the 41st year of Maran Sadiyan (Varaguna).²⁸ At Eruvadi nearby, his inscription dated 43rd regnal year is also known to us.²⁹

10. *Parantaka Vira Narayana and Rajasimha*

The inscription of these two kings, father and son, have been found. The records of the former continued to be rare. The copper plate issued by Vira Narayana has been discussed in detail. Besides that, we get a few stray records of his in the Srivaikuntam taluk which are not however very informative. One of them, mentions a number of temple functionaries. They are all Vatteluttu records.³⁰ An inscription in grantha character on the sluice of a tank at Nilaiyur in Madurai district calls it as *Sri-Vira-Narayan*, evidently called after Vira Narayana.³¹

The exact year of the commencement of his rule is not known. But, the Dalavaypuram plate was issued in his 45th regnal year. Prof. Sastri tentatively gave A.D. 880 i.e., after the battle of Sripurambiam. On Varaguna's defeat, he came to power and, if calculation is made on that basis, 45th year would be A.D. 925 which is impossible. Evidently, his reign ran concurrently with his brother's perhaps starting a little later, and might well have been over by A.D. 900 when Rajasimha succeeded him.

Rajasimha: The inscription of Vira Narayana's son Rajasimha are surprisingly many. It was during his reign that Parantaka Chola invaded Madurai as a result of which Rajasimha had to flee from his capital and seek refuge in Ceylon and lead a fugitive's life in the Chera

28 ARE 1928-29, p. 66-67

29 605 of 1915

30 ARE 1931-32 p. 68

31 ARE 1929-30 p. 74-75.

kingdom. However, quite a few records giving his regnal year upto even 24th, have been found in Pandya nadu. There is one dated inscription in the 3rd regnal year found on the door jamb of the Vishnu shrine at Attur.³² It records a gift for the Tirunarayana-Vinnagar by his chief or officer by name Vikkiramakamukha — Pallavaraiyan of Kulattur. Another Vatteluttu record of his at Kottainangulam informs that the temple was known as *Rajasimhesvaram* — called after Rajasimha III (Sadaiyan-maran).³³ Rajasimha's inscription dated in his 9th regnal year are found in Vishnu temple at Sinnamanur, Kurralanatha temple at Kuttalam; 10 year at Tenur, 11th and 13th year at Ambasamudram; 14th year at Solavandan, 17th year again at Kuttalam; 19th year at Nangunci; 20th year at Tirupputaimarudur and Uttamapalayam; 21st year at Kovilkulam and Sevilipperi; 24th year at Perungulam near Srivaikuntam etc.³⁴ If his accession is taken as 900 A.D., his 24th year would be A.D. 924 when perhaps the Cholas led by parantaka displaced him and forced him to flee to Kerala, the home of his mother Vānavanmahadevi.

11. *Solan-talai-konda Vira Pandya* (946—966)

We have already seen in detail the valuable data furnished by the Sivakasi copper plate issued by this king. We will briefly review the information contained in his stone inscriptions, discovered in recent years. During his time, the Pandyas made a recovery and recaptured Madurai from the Cholas, who were at that time engaged with the Rashtrakuta invasion of Chola country. More than 15 inscriptions of his are available now. There are three of his inscriptions found recently on the door jambs of the Airavatesvara temple at Anaiyur, near Madurai. One of them dated in his 10th year states that the king made certain offerings to the deity by whose grace he obtained the kingdom.³⁵ It is also mentioned that the king issued this order from his seat named *Vira-Keralan* in the palace called *Manabharanan-tirumaligai* in Mangalpaṭṭuram. The name *Vira Keralan* might have been given to the seat because Vira Pandya's mother was a Chera princess and the

32 223 of 1941

33 270 of 1927-28

34 S.I.I. XIV, No. 47 to 77

35 ARE 1961-62, pp. 16-17

name *Manabharana-tirumaligai* might be after Vira Pandya's father Manabharana.

From the Anaiyur inscriptions, we also learn of his officers such as Murkha-Vichchadira-Pallavaraiyar *alias* Sattan Tamilan, who figures as the donor. His 4th year record at Pallimadam in Ramanathapuram district mentions that the temple was called Sundara-Pandya-Isvara, evidently called after his brother Sundara Pandya for whom the temple was built as a memorial or *Pallippadai*³⁶. The village is called Pallippadai. This corroborates the evidence given by Sivakasi plates.

An officer donor of this grant was Solantaka Pallavaraiyar. From another record we know Kuruvitturai was named a Solantaka-Chaturvedimangalam.

His 5th year record from Kilmathur, Madurai, refers to the erection of a stone lintel named Srikanthesvaram by an officer Tennavan Kandan-Sattan. A flower garden was also endowed and it was called "Solantakan" after the title of the ruler. The officer examined the affairs of the temple and issued certain regulations, regarding the lands belonging to the temple priests (*aganaligaiyars*), drummers (*Uvachchars*) etc.³⁷ Another record dated 8th year in the same temple contains an eulogy of the chieftain whose full name was Tennavan-Tamilvel.³⁸ His 15th year record at Perungulam mentions an officer by name Pandimarttanda-Pallavaraiyan. In an inscription of Rajasimha himself the name Pandimarttanda-valandu occurs and as if it might have been a title of Rajasimha. Manavira Valanadu is mentioned as a part of Tiruvaludi-valandu. Manavira might have been a title assumed by a king earlier than Vira Pandya.³⁹ His 20th year record has been found in the Erichchavudaiyar temple at Ambasamudram. It mentions certain officers like Vikrama-Pandya-Muvendavelan, Cholantaka-Brahmarayan, Tamilvel etc. It mentions a gift to Acharyan Manabharanan Sendan who built this stone-temple.⁴⁰

36 S.I.I. XIV, No. 79

37 *Ibid*, No. 84 and 85

38 *Ibid*, No. 87

39 93

40 *Ibid*, No. 94

Incidentally, the astronomical data given in the record enables us to fix the date of Vira Pandya's accession more or less exactly as between A. D. 946 and 947. A record of Vira Pandya dated in his 20th year at Salaigramam in Ramanathapuram district informs us that the king was camping at Tiruppalaiyur.⁴¹ *Tennavan-Tāmilvel*, an officer of the king is eulogised for his scholarship in Sanskrit and Tamil. He is described as a minister well-versed in the *Vedas*, *Vedāṅgas*, law, puranas and *muttamīl* (the three branches of Tamil learning), *Patanjalām*. He was a native of Kanchi.

Chola Occupation :

In A.D. 962, Vira Pandya suffered a defeat at Sevur at the hands of Sundara Chola (the father of Rajaraja I), who assumed the title *Madurai-konda-Rajakesarivarman*. But again, Vira Pandya's records are found in Pandyanadu not later than his 20th regnal year i.e. A.D. 966. During this year, he was defeated and killed by Aditya Chola, who assumed the title *Vira Pandyan-talai-konda Ko-Parakesari* in the second year of his reign. From then on, commenced the regular and continuous rule of the Cholas over the Pandyan country. Though the Pandyas rose in revolt frequently against the Chola overlordship, the Chola conquest of Pandimandala became complete during the time of Rajaraja I who assumed the title *Pandya Kulasani*. Pandyanadu was named as *Rajaraja-mandalam*. Inscriptions brought to light in recent years show how systematic the process of "Cholaisation" of Pandyan country took place from street and village name to that of the temples and the province. This will be dealt with in a later context. During the period of Chola occupation, they appointed their close family members as viceroys to be in charge of the Pandyan country and called them as Chola-Pandyas. The first among them was Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya, the son of Rajendra I. Next, we hear of three more viceroys — Maravarman Vikrama Chola Pandya, Jatavarman Chola Pandya and Maravarman Parakramachola Pandya. This was the system by which the Cholas wanted to keep their imperial hold on Pandyan territory. They kept Chola regiments at several places like Anaiyur in Madurai taluk, Sermadevi in Tirunelveli dt. By assuming the Pandyan names and titles, they wanted to wipe out all memories of

the Pandyas and step into their shoes. But this did not succeed for long. The Pandyas never reconciled themselves to the Chola occupation and we find several members of the line rising from time to time to displace the Cholas and re-establish the Pandyan rule. Quite a few records giving interesting information about them have come to light. A copper plate issued by Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya was discovered at Pandavarmangalam in Koilpatti taluk in 1958.⁴² It is dated in his 10th year. It is highly corroded. It calls Pandavamangalam as Panchavanmadevi-Chaturvedimangalam. This is the only copper plate charter of the Chola-Pandya viceroys. I shall refer to certain new data about Chola-Pandya viceroys also here.

1. *Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya :*

Mannarkoil was called Rajaraja-Chaturvedimangalam and the temple therein was called Rajendrasola-Vinnagar.⁴³ Sermadevi was called Nigalarisola-Chaturvedimangalam and the temple therein called *Cholendrasimhesvaram*.⁴⁴ Perungulam in Tirunelveli dt. was called Uttamasolanallur.⁴⁵ At Arrur-Perungulam evidently a Chola regiment was stationed. A soldier belonging to the regiment which was called *Sundara-Solapandyatterinde-palai yeral* gave a donation to the local temple. Three of his records have recently been found at Anaiyur near Madurai dated in his 5th, 9th and 13th year. One of them mentions the existence of Padaitalaivar or heads of regiments — as the authority over the affairs of the temple.⁴⁶

Two Chera feudatories of the Chola emperor are mentioned. Cheramanar Rajasingar built the shrine of Rajendra Sola Vinnagar at Mannarkoil in about A.D. 1033-34. He figures in many other inscriptions too.⁴⁷ Another Chera feudatory by name Cheramanar Rajarajdeva figures in the inscription of Mar. Vikramasola Pandya.⁴⁸

42 ARE, 1958-59, P. 16

43 S.I.I. XIV No. 144

44 *Ibid*, No. 137

45 *Ibid*, No. 131

46 Indian Archaeology, 1961-62, p. 82

47 No. 170 (S.I.I. XIV)

48 *Ibid*, 144, 150, 154, 193 etc.

2. *Maravarman Vikrama Chola Pandya:*

The next Chola-Pandya viceroy was Vikrama Chola Pandya, whose 20th regnal year is the earliest date that is available. Why earlier records of his are not available is not clear. It is quite likely that he was a co-regent of his predecessor for nearly 20 years and that he actually governed the Pandyan viceroyalty in his own name for the last five years (20th to 25th year). His records have been found only in the district of Tirunelveli and not elsewhere. Arrur is stated to have been a part of Rajadhiraja-Chaturvedimangalam.⁴⁹ Rajadhiraja was the Chola ruler at that time. A captain or *dandanayaga* of a regiment of a battalion by name Parakrama-Narayana is mentioned as a donor in a record from Sermadevi.⁵⁰ The circumambulatory of the Sermadevi temple was called *Rajadhirajan-Tiruchurralai*. His records dated in his 25th regnal year are found at Attur, Tirunelveli district. Why his epigraphs are absent in Madurai and Ramanathapuram districts is not known.

3. *Jatavarman Chola-Pandya:*

The next viceroy was the son of the Chola king Virarajendra. He was conferred the title of Chola-Pandya and sent as viceroy. His records are only few and they too are to be found in Tirunelveli district. His 24th and 25th year records come from Sucindram.⁵¹ His exact reign period is still not clear. A record of his 3rd year from Sermadevi informs us that he was seated in the palace at Rajendrasolapuram. There is also a mention that he received certain order from the Chola king, *nam ayyar*, directing him to exempt certain lands from taxation.⁵² This would show the firm control by the central authority.

4. *Maravarman Parakrama Chola-Pandya:*

The last Chola-Pandya viceroy was Parakrama Chola Pandya who styled himself Maravarman. The only two records of his known to us were found as early as 1916. Nothing has been added to this, later. They are also found only in Tirunelveli district. One of them

49 186

50 *Ibid*, 189

51 S.I.L. XIV, p. v.

52 194

mentions the benefaction made by some natives of Kashmiradesam and Aryadesam who probably came on pilgrimage or settled down there.⁵³

Recovery of the Pandyas :

Jatavarman Sri Vallabha (Acc. A. D. 1120-22)

The appointment of Chola-Pandya viceroys was probably discontinued during the time of Kulottunga I during whose reign the five Pandyan princes made combined bid to extricate the Pandyan kingdom from the Chola yoke. Kulottunga claims to have put them to flight and placed the garrisons in strategically important centres of the dominions. But inscriptions issued by the Pandyan kings begin to appear in certain parts where they had regained control. One such important Pandyan prince, probably one of the "Five Pandyas" referred to above, was Jatavarman Sri Vallabha, whose inscriptions ranging from 2nd to 26th year have been found in large numbers in certain parts of Tirunelveli and Ramanathapuram district. Nearly 70 of his records have been collected by A. S. Ramanatha Iyer and the same published in S. I. I. Vol. 14. His *prasasti* began with the words *Tirumadandaiyum Jayamadandaiyum*. From a recently discovered record from Ambasamudram, we learn that he used another also viz., *Pumadu Punara*.⁵⁴ His contemporaneity with Kulottunga I is indicated by an inscription of Vijayamangalam. Another record gives useful astronomical data on the basis of which K. G. Krishnan fixes his date of accession between A. D. 1120-1122,⁵⁵ We get many useful details about him and his reign. A recently discovered record at Anaiyur informs us that he performed the coronation at *Vandamilkkudal* (*Madurai*).⁵⁶ His queen Ulagamulududaiyal patronised a *matha*.⁵⁷ His son Pillaiyar Sundara-Pandyadeva camped at Solapuram, in Koilpatti taluk, heard the representation made by the Sabha and made a gift of land to the local temple. The temple was called *Sundarapandya-vinnagar* and the village

53 S.I.I. XIV, Nos. 196-197;

54 ARE 1962-63, p. 31

55 *Ibid*, p. vi

56 ARE 1962-63, p. 31

57 S. I. I. XIV, 200 and 248

She constructed the kitchen at Tiruppattur temple.

Sundara Pandya Chaturvedimangalam.⁵⁸ But this prince does not appear to have succeeded to the throne. Another son was Manabharana.⁵⁹ A record from Nanguneri states that king Srivallabhadeva was seated in the *pallikkattit* named *Pandiyarajan* in the Alagia Pandyan hail in the palace at Madurai when he heard a petition for tax-exemption.⁶⁰ One record calls the throne as *Kalingattaraiyan*.⁶¹ This is repeated by several records. This would clearly show that Srivallabha was strongly entrenched at Madurai. A record mentions an important minister or Uttaramantri by name Parakrama-Pandya-Uttarmantri which might show that Parakrama Pandya might have been a predecessor or co-regent of Sri Vallabha.⁶² His Senapathi was Rajaraja-Vallappa Nadalvar and another minister by name Manabharana-Uttiramantri.⁶³ A record of his 12th year from Vijayanarayanam mentions his contemporary Venadu ruler Ravi Kodaivarman, whose agent Vasudevan closed a breach in a tank and repaired a channel named after himself *Vasudevapperaru*.⁶⁴ A Valanadu came to be called *Sri Vallabha-Valandu* in which was included the Kudanadu.⁶⁵ He gave a large endowment to the temple of Alagiamanavala (Saumyanarayana temple) at Tirukkostiyur for a nine day festival, ending with the day of Chittirai which is also the natal star of the king.⁶⁶ His campings in Paganurnadu and his palace at Rajendrasolapuram in Rajasingakulakkil where from he issued an order to the Sabhas for tax-exemption are recorded.⁶⁷

Maravarman Tribhuvana Chakravarti Parakrama Pandya :

He was one of the Pandyan princes contemporary with Kulotunga I. He probably succeeded Sri Vallabha. His prasasti, *Tirumagal*

58 No. 205

59 He is described "nampillai", No. 225. Also see 238; 250

60 206, 223 and 229

திருப்புவன சக்ரவர்த்திகள் ஸ்ரீவல்லப தேவர் மதுரை கோயிலில் உள்ளன
அளகிய பாண்டிய கூடத்து பள்ளிக்கட்டில் பாண்டிய ராஜாவில் எழுந்தருளித்து.....

61 234

62 228 — *Parakrama Pandya Peraru* is also mentioned. Another record (236) mentions Kulasekharamangalam.

63 239

64 231

65 232

66 234

67 263 and 264

punara. His 23rd year record at Vikramamangalam quotes the 40th year of Kulottunga I.⁶⁸ We have already referred to several indirect references to him in the records of Sri Vallabha. For example 11th year record (A.D. 1131) mentions a channel called *Parakramapandiapperaru*.⁶⁹

Jatavarman Parantaka :

He lived in the latter part of Kulottunga I's reign. His prasasti beginning with "Tiruvalara Jayamvalara....." claims several spectacular victories like defeating the Chera king, conquest of south Kalinga country under Telunga-Bhima, marriage with Kupaka princess (S. Travancore). All these, as Prof. Sastri, rightly points out, were done while assisting the Chola king Kulottunga. A record of Sri Vallabha calls Karungulam near Tenkasi as Telingakulakala-chaturvedimangalam and it may be a reference to this episode.⁷⁰ A territorial division called *Parantaka-Valanadu* as well as *Sri Vallabha Valanadu* are mentioned.

Maravarman Sri Vallabhan (Acc. A. D. 1132-33)

His prasasti was *Poomagal Jayamagal*. He probably ruled upto A.D. 1182. His inscriptions are found in Tirunelveli district.⁷¹ A record dated in his 31st year refers to his order issued from the office room (*eluthumandapam*) at Varatungadevanallur for instituting a service called *Ahavarman-Sandhi* on the day of his natal star which was *Purattasi*. This record has the prasasti beginning with *Jayamadandaiyum*.⁷²

Jatavarman Kulasekhara (Acc. 1162 A. D. to 1173)

Son of Sri Vallabha. Prasasti *Puthalamadandai*. Like his father, he was ruling with Tirunelveli as the Capital while his brother Parakrama Pandya was ruling over the northern part from Madurai. He started the first Pandyan Civil war. Kulasekhara sacked Madurai. Parakrama Pandya appealed to Singalam for help. Before help could come to him he was killed and Madurai captured. The Ceylon troops marched forward and succeeded in displacing Kulasekhara and restoring the

68 ARE 1909, p. 29; ARE 1910, p. 32

69 318 of 1908

70 *Ibid*, XXV, p. 84

71 *Ibid*, XXV, p. 84

72 243 of 1939-40; His second year record states that he was seated in his throne *Munaiyadaraiyan* at Tirunelveli (271 of 1927-28).

Madurai throne to Vira Pandya, the son of the dead king Parakarama. Many details of his reign are already well known from different sources including the *Mahavamsa*. Ultimately, Kulasekhara sought the help of the Cholas to drive out the Ceylonese forces and recaptured Madurai. Chola king Rajadhiraja II entrusted Madurai with Kulasekhara. But the Chola king, Kulottunga III, inflicted a crushing blow on the Singalese army and put Vikrama Pandya firmly on the throne. Vira Pandya was defeated. It is said that Kulottunga placed his foot on Vira Pandya's head and dismissed him (அவன் முடிமேல் அடிவைத்து). Then Vira Pandya took refuge in Travancore. Thus ended the first war of Pandyan succession, thanks to the Chola intervention. But ironically, this was the last occasion of Chola intervention, for after Kulottunga III, the Chola kingdom was itself ruled by weak monarchs and it was slowly cut asunder by feudatories, who led to its downfall.

Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya :

Though much is known about Kulasekhara, almost nothing was known about his contemporary rival Parakrama Pandya. More recently, two of his inscriptions have been found at Devadanam in Ramanathapuram district.⁷³ It refers to the fact that original priests of the local temple failed to attend to their duties even after repeated calls and, the king during his camp there, appointed a new man for the duty, by name Mudivalangum-Pandya-Brahmadirayan *alias* Surya Bhattar. This incident may indicate the general disorder or confusion prevailing in the land.⁷⁴ The king also arranged for the renovation of the temple. In the same time, there is also a record of Maravarman Sri Vallabha (Acc. 1133 A. D). One person Nemeli Udaiyan has attested both the records. Sri Vallabha's record refers to even a Parakrama-Sandi. This would show that Parakrama was a contemporary and even co-regent of Sri Vallabha. Apart from this no other new record or additional information about him is available. His year of accession and under what circumstances he came to rule over the northern part of Pandyanadu etc., are still a mystery. It is, however, likely as Prof. Sastri has surmised, he would have been at first loyal to the Cholas.

73 ARE, 1939-40, p. 244.

74 We get a similar case at Tirupattur where worship in the temple was stopped when the Sinnhalase army under Lankapura Dandanyaka occupied it.

Jatavarman Vira Pandya :

Son of Parakrama Pandya and a rival of Jatavarman Kulasekhara I ; made several attempts to dislodge Kulasekhara with the help of Singhalese forces but forced to run away to Trivandrum.

Jatavarman Vikrama Pandya: (Acc. 1180)

He was the son and successor of Jatavarman Kulasekhara. After ousting Vira Pandya, the Chola king Kulottunga III put him firmly on the Pandyan throne at Madurai in A. D. 1180. He ruled upto A. D. 1190. He was throughout loyal to the Chola king, Kulottunga III and his reign which lasted upto A. D. 1190 was peaceful. A new record of Vikrama Pandya found at Kattarimangalam in Tiruchendur taluk states that the village was renamed as Vikrama Pandya—Chaturvedimangalam and 64 learned Brahmans well-versed in the *vedas* and *sastras* were settled down there.⁷⁵ This would show the peaceful times returning, after all the turmoil of civil war.

Second Pandyan Empire :

From now on, the Pandyan kingdom recovered rapidly much of the power and glory that characterised it before the sack of Madurai by Parantaka. Vikrama Pandya was friendly and loyal to his benefactor Kulottunga III. But with the coming in of his successor Jatavarman Kulasekhara (Acc. A. D. 1190) Chola-Pandya relations underwent complete change. "From this time on, almost to end of the 13th century (for about 200 years), the power of the Pandyas attained great strength and expanded as far north as Nellore and Cuddappah; a succession of able and truly distinguished rulers in the main line made the Second Pandyan Empire a real power in the politics of South India in their age. Their successes in war, their patronage of literature and arts and the methods of their rule are amply borne out by numerous records they have left behind."⁷⁶ This period of Pandyan ascendancy is already well documented. Not only the records of Pandyas but also numerous records of their contemporaries like the Cholas, Hoysalas, Telugu Chodas, Kādavaryars, Sambhuvarayas, Kakatiyas give us a full picture of the times, hardly leaving any major gap to be filled.

75 377 of 1929-30

76 K. A. N. Sastri: *The Pandyan Kingdom*, p. 139

There is no need to dwell on it in detail. I shall only draw attention to any piece of interesting information that has come to light in recent years.

Jatāvarman Kulasekara I Acc. 1190

He was the first great ruler whose rule extended over the districts of Madurai, Ramanathapuram and Tirunelveli. A record from Tiruppattur makes prominent mention of his officers Kandan Aludiyan *alias* Kalavayil Nadalvan and Mummudi Solan Malavar Chakravarti.⁷⁷ The former was probably in charge of the regions around Tirumayyam and Tiruppattur. The name Malavar or Malavachakaravarti is interesting and it seems to have been the surname adopted by the chiefs of Sembonmari, who figure in the Singhalese invasion of Pandyanadu. The Singhalese general Lankapura Dandanayaka is said to have captured the fortress of Sembonmari and later on, gave it back to Malava Chakravarti.⁷⁸ It may be mentioned in this connection that the throne of Kulasekhara was known as *Malavarayan*. It appears to me that this was contributed or gifted to the king by the Malavarayans.

An inscription of his 3rd year from Sermadevi found in 1964 mentions a gift by the Chera prince Kodai Iravivarman, the brother-in-law (Machunar) of the Pandyan king.⁷⁹ Some of his inscriptions are now available from Alagarkoil one of which informs us that his queen was Dharanimuludaiyal. She established the flower garden near the spring on the top of Alagar hill.⁸⁰ The king's machchunanar (brother-in-law) by name Viradamuditta-Perumal built a Vishnu temple at Settur in Ramanathapuram district. It was named Serankarayan-vinnagar.⁸¹ Is this brother-in-law same as Kōdai Ravi, the Chera king? Alagaperumal is also mentioned as the king's brother-in-law.

A record of Tirupparankunram informs us that there was a hall called *Kulasekhara-Narasinga-Mandapa*, built by Narasinga, an officer under Kulasekharan. A record of Maran Sundara Pandyan refers to Kulasekhara as *Perianāyanar* i. e., elder brother.

77 167, 187, and 188 of 1935-36

78 ARE, 1935-36, pp. 78, 79.

79 Indian Archaeology, 1964-65, p. 57

80 300 of 1929-30.

81 ARE, 1939-40, p. 245

From a record of 13th year from Vembattu and other similar records elsewhere, we understand that land-measurements were revised and fresh assessments made at the instance of Kalavali-nādalvan by the king.⁸² A new measuring standard called *Kuditangi* which is 1/4 longer than the older one was introduced and the lands were surveyed by this new standard.⁸³ The king instituted an endowment for offering to God Kalapiran during the *Kulasekharan-Sandi*.⁸⁴ A record of Kulasekhara dated Ś 1134 = A.D. 1212 mentions an officer by name Manābharana Muvendavelan of Kappalur who excavated a channel called *Tyaganchiriya-peraru* from the Vaigai.⁸⁵

Māravarman Sundara I (Acc. A. D. 1215)

He was a brother of Kulasekhara, who is called *Periyanāyanar*. Many officers like Kalavayil Nadalvan and Malava Chakravarti served both the brothers. Already we know much about his brilliant conquests and other achievements which laid the foundation of the Pandyan hegemony. He turned the tables on the Cholas. He carried fire and sword into the heart of the Chola country, captured the capital (Mudikondacholapuram) and even performed the *Virabhisheka* at Ayirattali. He fully deserved the titles *Sonadu konda*, and *Sonadukonda-mudikonda-solapurathu-virar*. Since he had the good sense to give back the kingdom to the weak Chola, Rajaraja III, he called himself *Sonaduvalangiaruliya*. His records also showed the part played by the Hoysalas on behalf of the tottering Chola kingdom. Vira Narsimha, the Hoysala, even invaded the Pandyan country to prevent the Pandyan incursions. A record of Sundara Pandya (22nd year - A. D. 1239) from Tiruppattur mentions certain individuals who took advantage of the Hoysala intervention and tried to create disorder by breaking into the temple treasury. They were later captured and punished.⁸⁶ Another record datable to A. D. 1236 refers to the collection of a special cess from the residents of Ilaiyangudi to be paid to the Hoysala general Mahapradhani Bhogadandanāyaka for immunity against his

82 *Ibid*, p. 245

83 323 and 329 of 1959-60.

84 341 of 1959-60

85 333 of 1961-62.

86 170 of 1935-36.

plundering raids.⁸⁷ It is probable that it was due to this Hoysala intervention that the Sundara returned the Chola kingdom to the Cholas.

His throne named *Malavarayan* at Madurai is mentioned. At the request of Malavarayar, he remitted taxes for the Sundarapandyan-Sandi for the Varagunisvaram temple at Salaigramam in Ramanathapuram district.⁸⁸ A record from the Vishnu temple at Tentirupperai records the construction of a mandapa *Jnanasamudra-mandapa* in the name of the king. From this, we know that it was another title for the king. It refers to the setting up of the image of Bhumi-parattiyar in the village which was called Sundara-Pandya Chaturvedimangalam.⁸⁹ Sundaramurti and Paravainachiar were also installed in the Siva temple in same village.⁹⁰ A record from Tiruchi mentions Tirubhuvanamādevi-nallur and it may suggest his queen's name.⁹¹ A record from Tiruppattur gives a long list of the various officers in different regions of Pandyanadu under Sundara. Among them is mentioned Alagapperumal, styled as the king's brother-in-law.⁹² Since he also figures as brother-in-law of Jatāvarman Kulasekhara, this provides another proof to suggest that the latter and Maran Sundara were brothers. The other officers mentioned are :

1. Gāngeyan.
2. Aiyan Malavarayan
3. Nartongarayan, the chief of Niyamam in Adalaiyur.
4. Kōdai kandan *alias* Kuralayattaraiyar.
5. Adigaman of Tiruppuranam.
6. SIRRUDAIYAN
7. Alagapperumal (brother-in-law)

87 294 of 1949-50.

88 313 of 1948-49

89 284 of 1940-41

90 248

91 323 of 1955-56.

92 176 186 of 1935-36.

8. Mantiri Raman *alias* Pallavaraiyan of Perumanallur in Anda-nadu.
9. Nilangaraiyan of Sembinadu.
10. Kulasekhara Uttaramantri.
11. Mānabharana Muvendavelan of Kappalur.

Māravarman Sundara II

He had a short reign. During his period, the Hoysala influence increased and with its consequent confusion.⁹³ His inscription dated 14th year at Nanguneri mentions a battallion called *Iranasingaviran tirinda villigal*.⁹⁴ His records mention the following officer Aiyan Malavarayan and Annan Tamilpallavaraiyan of Chakrapaninallur.⁹⁵ His thrones were called *Malavaraiyan* and *Pallavaraiyan*. His wife was Ulagmuludaiyal. Vikrma Chola, the brother-in-law of Mar. Vikrama, is also called brother-in-law of Maran Sundara II—clearly indicating that the latter was Vikrama's brother—a relation⁹⁶ which was unknown to us.

Jatavarman Sundara (Acc. A. D. 1252)

He was the greatest of the kings of the Second Pandyan empire. Under him the Pandyan empire reached the zenith of glory both in the political conquests and cultural achievements. The entire Tamil country and beyond, from Kanyakumari to Nellore in Andhra came under his active control. Malainadu and Kongunadu were also conquered, thus deserving his title *Emmandalamum Kondaruliya Sundara Pandya Devar*. His impartial benefactions to Chidambaram and Srirangam temples are well known. He performed a *tulabhara* and erected a Golden Hall for Lord Nataraja. He covered the tower for Ranganatha at Srirangam with gold and assumed the title *Hemachandan Raja* and *Koil-ponmeinda-perumal*. He set up images called *koil-ponmeinda-perumal* in different parts of his country.⁹⁷ These are well known facts. Some additional information is furnished by the more recently discovered records of his.

93 K. A. N. Sastri, *op. cit.* p. 158

94 ARE 1927-28, p. 56

95 ARE 1939-40 p. 247

96 ARE 1929-30, p. 27

97 For example at Tiruvendipuram, ARE, 1937-38 p. 75

He built a hall in the Vishnu temple at Alagarkoil. It was called *Koyil-ponmeinda-perumal tirumandapam*.⁹⁸ At Srirangam itself he appears to have built another mandapa named *Seranai-venran-tirumandapa*. This was a title he assumed after his conquest over Travancore. The *gopuram* on the eastern side of Sundaresa shrine in Minakshi Amman temple was probably built by him as it is called *Avanivendarama-tirugopuram*.⁹⁹ Two other records of Jatavarman Sundara refer to a service called *Avanivenda Raman-Sandical* called after the king but the birth star given in the record viz., *Uttirattadi* does not fit in with Jatavarman Sundara I whose natal star was *Mula*. Nor does it fit in with Sundara III whose birth star was *Pushya*. So this has to be ascribed to Jatavarman Sundara II (Acc. 1276).¹⁰⁰

There was some doubt about the identification of the king who bore the title *Ellāntalaiyana-perumal*. A recently discovered record at Tiruvendipuram states that Sundara II set up the image of *Ellāntalaiyana-perumal* in the name of his elder brother (*annalvi*) Sundara Pandya deva. This would show that this title belonged to Sundara I. Maravarman Kulasekhara also had this title.¹⁰¹

Jatavarman Sundara probably built the Sundara Pandya gopura of Vishnu temple at Srivaikuntam as attested by a record.¹⁰² Tevapiran Tadan, an influential Vaishnava leader is said to have met king Sundara Pandya while he was camping at Viradavalem in the 2nd year of his reign.¹⁰³

Jatūvarman Vira Pandya (Acc. 1253—1268)

He was a contemporary and co-regent of Jatavarman Sundara. He commenced his co-regency two years after Sundara i.e., A.D. 1253. He takes credit for some of the successes like the conquest of Kongu, Ilam, Vadugu etc. As Prof. Sastri correctly points out, he apparently did all these under the orders and on behalf of Sundara. His inscriptions are available mostly in Pandyanadu, and some in Kongu,

98 85 of 1928-29

99 281 of 1939-40

100 299 and 300 of 1943-44.

101 ARE 1955-56

102 373 of 1959-60

103 *Ibid*, p. 25

Cholamandalam and Tondaimandalam. He performed Virabhishekam and Vijayabhishekam at Chidambaram in A.D. 1267. The mandapa where he performed this came to be called *Vira-Pandyan-Tirumandapam*.¹⁰⁴

A record calls him by the epithet *Vellanaï-Venrān*. Vallan might stand for Ballala or the Hoysala. It may be remembered that Vira Pandya's contemporary Jatavarman Sundara defeated the Hoysalas at Kannanur and killed the king Somesvara. So, Vira Pandya's title has a bearing on this conflict.¹⁰⁵

A record from Sucindram dated Kollam 413 (i.e., A.D. 1238) makes reference to constructions made by Venad ruler Vira-Ravi-Varma through an agent. The same agent also received money endowment from Chokkattandal *alias* Ulagamulududaiyar, the queen of Vira Pandya in A.D. 1256.¹⁰⁶

Māvarman Kulasakhara I (Acc. 1268-1312)

He was also a contemporary of Jatavarman Sundara and Vira Pandya. In 1268, the date of his accession, all the three were kings — a practice very peculiar to the Pandyan Kingdom alone and which had struck the foreign visitors also. Not only this, the rule of nearly 5 kings overlap with one another, making it rather difficult to demarcate sharply their jurisdiction. Thus, as Prof. Sastri shows, a Maravarman Vikrama Pandya, two Jatavarman Sundaras (I and II), Jatavarman Vikrama Pandya and the Maravarman Kulasekhara, are known to have had their rule in close proximity and even overlap. Close to them again were two Sri Vallabhas, Maravarman and Jatavarman (acc. 1257 and 1291).¹⁰⁷ The foreign visitors were struck by this peculiar system prevailing here. Marco Polo who was here by the end of the 13th century wrote of the "Five royal brothers" and "five crowned kings". Wassaf also mentions Sundara Pandya and his three brothers, each ruling independently. This system of joint rulers or co-regents or many ruling simultaneously must have been the result of the great extension

104 616 of 1929-30; S. Pandarattar, *Pandiar Varalaru*, P. 136

105 94 of 1933-34

106 ARE 1958-59, p. 18

107 Sastri, *op. cit.* p. 182

of the empire during 13th century and an imitation of the Chola practice of sending out princes of the royal family as viceroys".¹⁰⁸

Maravarman Kulasekhara was however a powerful monarch whose inscriptions are numerous. By this time the Chola line had ceased to be a power. Jayamkonda-solamandalam is mentioned as the seat of Kulasekhara. Malainadu, Sonadu, Kongu, Ilam and Tondaimandalam are mentioned as his conquests. They were already subjugated, but probably some local uprising caused them to be re-conquered. Hence, his titles *Cheranai-Venra*, *Kollamkonda* etc.

A record of his 35th year speaks of throne *Kachchikku-vachan* in his palace at Viradavalam in Uraiyur-Kurram.¹⁰⁹ This palace was also called *Uyyakkondan-Tirumalai*, 4 miles from Uraiyur.¹¹⁰ Another throne in his palace at Jayamkondasolapuram was called *Kālingarayan*. These are clear proofs that the Cholas had ceased to exist as a power and their towns and capitals became the seats of Pandyan power. This may also indicate the possibility of Maravarman Kulasekhara being put in charge of the newly conquered Chola territory.

A new record from Srirangam datable to A.D. 1277 mentions a donation by the commander of the Pandyan forces that invaded Ceylon. His full name was Matitungan Tanininru-venrān Perumal *alias* Aryachakravarti of Chakravartinalur in Sevvurukkai-nadu.¹¹¹ The Singhalese *Mahavamsa* speaks about this Aryachakravarti as the hero of the Pandyan expedition who sacked the fortress of the city of Subhagiri and took away the venerable tooth relic and much wealth.

A very useful record of Kulasekhara from Venugopala temple at Ilaiyangudi speaks of the chieftain Vānadarayar Kālingarayan who constructed a number of temples and established *agrarahas* for the memory of his overlord Kulasekhara and his son prince Vira Pandya.¹¹² The chieftain was evidently a Bana chieftain. The Vānadarayar began to gain importance later and several of them named

108 *Ibid*

109 319 of 1950-30

110 242 of 1941-42 — ARE, Part II, p. 248

111 7 of 1936-37

112 ARE 1949-50

Mahabali Vānadaraiyas figure in later records in Alagarkoil and Srivilliputtur. One of them known as Kulasekhara Mabali Vānadaraiyan figures in the inscription of Kulasekhara.

Jatavarman Vira Pandya (Acc. 1270-71) and *Jatavarman Sundara II* (Acc. 1276)

Not much was known about the relationship between these two and Kulasekhara except that they figure simultaneously. Some records found recently have cleared the doubts. From two records, we come to know that Vira Pandya and Sundara were Kulasekhara's sons.¹¹³ One records of the former mentions that he helped in the conquest of Kongu and Ilam.¹¹⁴ There are two interesting records at Sri Vaikuntam which prove the contemporaneity of Kulasekhara, Sundara and Vira Pandya. A Sri Vaishnava leader Tevapiran Tādar met all the three kings at different places and probably on different occasions for endowments.¹¹⁵ He met Kulasekhara at his palace at Gangaikondasolapuram in his 38th year, Sundara Pandya at Viradavalan (near Uraiyur) in his 2nd year and Vira Pandya at Kandiur in his 2nd year. From this we can know Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya were junior contemporaries and sons of Kulasekhara.

Jatavarman Sundara II is better represented. He ruled between 1276 and 1292-93. He is the "Soundr Bandi Devar" of Marco Polo and Wassaf witnessed his death in Hijra 692.

Māravarman Vikrama Pandya (Acc. 1283 to 1296)

As pointed out earlier, he was a junior contemporary and co-regent of elder brother Kulasekhara. He had titles Bhuvanaikaviran, Korkaikāvalan, Rajakkal Nayan etc. At Tiruvendipuram, a special offering to the temple named *Rajakkal-nayan-Sandi* was performed on Vaikasi month in *hasta* star, probably the king's natal star. Another offering named *Vikrama-pandyan sandi* was performed on the day of *Rohini* being his coronation day.¹¹⁶ A record from Tayumanavar temple, Tiruchi mentions the formation of a Chaturevedimangalam named

113 ARE, 1949-50

114 *Ibid.*, and also ARE 1935-36, p. 82

115 ARE 1960-61, p. 23

116 ARE 1955-65, p. 7

after the mother of Kulasekhara, Kannudiya-nayaki.¹¹⁷ Vikrama's wife was Ulagamulududaiyar for whom a service or sandi was instituted at Tirunamanallur in South Arcot.¹¹⁸

Vikrama Pandya is credited with having fought successfully with the Cholas on the banks of the Vellaru. We get some details about this battle now. A certain Vanadaraiyan and his sons fought heroically.¹¹⁹ His throne *Munaiyadariyan* at Madurai and *Melaiyaderaiyan* at Rajendram are mentioned. His 5th year record from South Arcot district speaks of a nādu named as Vikrama Pandya-valanadu.¹²⁰

Civil war and the Muhammadan invasion :

Towards the last years of Maravarman Kulasekhara another son, Jatavarman Sundara III become the sub-king, sometime in A.D. 1303 along with his elder brother Jatavarman Vira Pandya who ascended the throne in 1297. Wassaf has recorded the civil war between these two brothers. In this, the old king Kulasekhara was murdered and Sundara Pandya was also defeated. He apparently sought the help of the invading Muslim forces under Malik Kafur, the general of Allaud-din. His invasion only added to the confusion. We have the accounts of Wassaf and Amir Khusru about his raids. Another invasion under Khusra Khan has received full treatment in S. K. Iyengar's book *South India and Her Muhammadan Invaders*.

Malikkafur's inroad, as Prof. Sastri observes, marked the beginning of the end of the Second Empire. The northern part of the empire went to the Kakatiyas. Ravivarman Kulasekhara also ran through the entire Tamil country in 1311-12, soon after Malik Kafur left South India. From then on, the history the Pandyas became the story of progressive decline, ending in the restriction of their sway to portions of Tirunelveli district and towards the close of 16th century in their final disappearance. This Jatavarman Sundara III (Acc. 1303) had the title *Kōdandarama* and he also seems to have issued a coin in

117 *Ibid.*,

118 252-3 of 1939-40

119 270 of 1939-40

120 137 of 1956-57

that name. His record from South Arcot mentions the formation of settlement called Kodandarama-Chaturvedimangalam.¹²¹

His contemporary and rival Vira Pandya had the title Kaliyugaraman. His record of 31st year from North Arcot region records a gift by his queen Ulagamuluduaiyar *alias* Kaliyugaraman-tiruttol-piriya-da-tirunangai.¹²² His record at Madurai mentions his *Tirumandira-olai* officer Tyagavinda-Brahmarajan.¹²³

Recently, some inscriptions of the time of the Muslim occupation of Pandyanadu have been found and I will close this lecture by referring to them. In the Rudrakotisvara temple at Velangudi in Tiruppattur taluk there is a record dated in the Hijra 736 and the 736 and the reigning king is called Maharajan Surattan (Sultan). This Hijra year corresponds to A.D. 1335-36. It records gift of land by Uravar to an individual (Munayadaraiyan) for his services to the village during the Muslim invasion (*Turukkar-vanam*). This affords evidence of the disturbed times that followed in the wake of the establishment of Muslim rule at Madurai by about A.D. 1323 (during the time of the Tughlaq). This would also show that the Sultan of Madurai became independent of Delhi by this time. It became so even in Hijra 734 = A.D. 1333-34. The people were aware of the presence of the new ruler and called him Surattan i.e., Sultan who probably was Jalaluddin Ashan Shah, the first Sultan of Madurai.¹²⁴

At Kayalpattanam, a number of Arabic and Tamil inscriptions from tomb-stones datable to 1336 and later (even upto 1496) have been found. The earliest dated in Hijra 737 in A.D. 1336 found on the mosque mentions construction of a Jama Masjid to Sultan Muhammad Jamaluddin and its completion.¹²⁵

Later history of the Pandyas :

The period of Madurai Sultanate, though only brief, was one of turmoil and widespread disturbance. The Pandyan cuntry had witnessed several invasions earlier, by the Pallavas, the Cholas and

121 ARE 1956-57, p. 77-78

122 ARE 1939-40, p. 251

123 279 of 1942.

124 ARE, 1958-59

125 ARE, 1949-50, p. 9.

others. But this invasion was entirely of a different character. The earlier conquerors never disturbed religious institutions and practices nor interfered with the individual's faith in the chosen religion. But this new alien wave with a holy war-cry tended to shake the very foundations of the hoary religious institutions like the temples. The enormous loot of the temples taken by Malik Kafur and his later counterparts are well attested by the contemporary Muslim historians and the indigenous records.¹²⁶ The Sanskrit epic *Madurai Vijayam* by Ganagadevi, the queen of Kampana, and the *Koil-olugu*, give a vivid picture of the heart-rending conditions of the times. The *koil-olugu* describes the sack of Srirangam and the *Madurai-talavaralāru*, the sack of Madurai. They are also confirmed by a number of inscriptions from the Hindu temples. From a record at Tiruppattur (Ramanathapuram district), we learn that the Muslim forces struck panic in the country, destroyed the temple, ransacked its treasures and desecrated the images therein. A certain Visdayadevan of Kunrakudi repaired this damage done and reconsecrated the images in the 46th year of Jatavarman Trivikrama Vira Pandya for which he earned the gratitude of the people of Tiruppattur. He was given certain special privileges and honours.¹²⁷ This would show the local resistance to the Muslim invasions. The Hoyasalesvara temple at Kannanur (near Tiruchi) was converted as a mosque. It was again restored to the Hindus by Kampana and the deity re-consecrated. It was also during the Muslim attack the idol of Lord Ranganathan at Srirangam was taken away by the Sri Vaishnava leader Sri Pillai Lokacharya to Alagarkoil and then from there to further south and ultimately to Tirupati. The idol was brought back and re-consecrated at Srirangam by Kampana who was ably assisted by Gopanna, the chieftain of Gingee. This account is attested by the Sanskrit work *Prapannāmritam*.¹²⁸ All these would show the sad state of affairs during the Muslim occupation of Pandyaadesa and the utter political vacuum. The Pandyas were compelled to retreat to the extreme south and the Hoysalas under Ballala III after giving a dogged

126 See accounts of Ibn Batuta and Amir Khasru.

127 161 of 1936.

128 For a full discussion of Kampana's campaigns etc., See S. K. Iyengar's *South India and Mohammedan Invaders* and A. Krishnaswami's *Tamil country under the Vijayanagar*.

fight also went down. There is evidence to show that the Sultanate had control over Madurai upto A.D. 1371. Kampana's inscription of this date, records his general Gopanna's victory over the 'Turushkars'. By about A.D. 1377-78, to be sure, all vestiges of the Muslim rule were removed and the Madurai region came under the sway of the newly risen Hindu empire of Vijayangar.

What part the Pandyas played in resisting the Muslim attacks and whether they helped the Hoysalas in their heroic struggle are questions for which no satisfactory answer is yet known. Apparently, there was no co-ordination or concerted action and the Pandyas ploughed their lonely furrow in the extreme south, leaving Madurai to its fate. This heart-rending condition is graphically described by Ganagadevi's *Madurā Vijayam* which says :—

"The temples in the land have fallen into neglect as worship in them has been stopped ... The suburban gardens of Madurai present a most painful sight ... on every side are seen rows of stakes from which swing strings of human skulls strung together. The Tamraparani is flowing red with the blood of slaughtered cows. The Veda is forgotten and justice has gone into hiding ... despair is writ large on the faces of the unfortunate Dravidars."¹²⁹ The work also makes a pathetic reference to the Pandyas and their ancient sword which had now passed on to Kampana. It mentions that the Pandyas who held unrivalled sway for a long time lost their power by the cruel stroke of fate and so Agastya sent the sword to Kampana. It fell to his lot to undertake the task of liberating Madurai from the yoke of Sultanate and thus fulfilled a task which the Pandyas could not accomplish.

Both, during the period of Madurai Sultanate and later when Vijayanagar occupied Madurai, the Pandyas had their restricted rule in Tirunelveli-Tenkasi region. But it would seem that people in the distant districts did not feel the impact of the establishment of Sultanate in Madurai sometime in A.D. 1330 or deliberately avoided any reference to the Muslim rule and continued to quote the regnal years of the Pandyan kings. The other interpretation would be that the Sultanate's authority was limited to the vicinity of Madurai and the interior and outlying places still continued to be under the different Pandyan

129 K. A. Nilakant Sastri, *op. cit.* p. 242

kings. Thus, the records of Maravarman Kulasekara who ruled between 1314 and 1346 are found at Sirkali in Thanjavur district. His co-regent was one Jatavarman Parakrama Pandya (A.D. 1315-1347) whose records are only few at Tirunelveli, Pudukottai and Thanjavur. The last mentioned king built the western tower and completed in A.D. 1323.¹³⁰ Maravarman Vira Pandya (c. A.D. 1334-1380) has left records in Pudukottai area. There were four more Parakrama Pandyas — one who ruled between 1335-52, a second who had his accession in A.D. 1357, a third in 1367 who renovated the central shrine and the *mandapa* at Kuttalam (in 1387) and another Parakrama whose accession took place sometime in A.D. 1334. We hear of a Jatavarman Kulasekhara who probably ruled from A.D. 1395. The records of the last mentioned kings are practically confined to Tirunelveli region. The Madurai region passed on to the hands of the Vijayanagar who gradually extended their sway throughout South India. The Tirunelveli Pandyas became more or less subordinate to the Vijayanagar who, however, recognised *locus standi* of the ancient Pandyan line to continue as semi-independent rulers in the Tirunelveli area. But intermittently, they indulged in the ambition to revive the ancient glory of the Pandyas which, however, did not meet with success. Thus, during the time of Virupaksha II, a Pandyan chief Bhuvanika Vira Samarakolāhala is said to have headed the forces of long-eared men (*lamba karna* or *cherulu potu*) and ran through the Tamil Nadu right upto Kanchi. Bhavanaika Vira's inscriptions are found in the Ekambaresvara temple, Kanchi. But Saluva Narasimha, the general of Virupaksha, came down to the south and expelled the invaders as far south as Rameswaram. This occurred sometime in A.D. 1470.¹³¹

But for this episode, the Pandyas continued to be in charge of Tirunelveli area owing allegiance to the Vijayanagar kingdom. During Achyutaraya's period, when the ruler of Trivandrum made incursions into the Pandyan territory, the Vijayanagar repulsed them and restored the territory to the Pandyas. Achyutaraya even married a Pandyan princess.¹³² The last of these kings lived upto A.D. 1562. In the

130 Kulasekhara Mahabali Vanaryar is mentioned as the uncle of this Parakrama Pandya (ARE: 1936-37, p. 77-78).

131 Further surces on Vijayanagar History.

132 Heras, *Aravida Dynasty*, pp. 113-17.

meantime, the Nayaks of Madurai rose to importance. The Nayak governorship was founded at Madurai sometime in A.D. 1533, but later on became almost independent in its authority and even challenged the Vijayanagar kingdom in its last days. By about the middle of the 17th century the Nayak's power spread to the whole of the Pandyan country, including Tirunelveli region.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

1. Territorial and Administrative Units :

Some considerable body of evidence has come up regarding the territorial divisions and administrative units of Pandimandalam. Sri Y. Subbarayalu has brought together some new data on this subject which deserves our attention.¹³³ The area was first known as Pandi-nadu and only from 13th century as Pandi-mandalam. From the time of Rajaraja I i.e. about A. D. 990, it was called *Rajaraja-valanadu*; as *Rajaraja-mandalam* from A.D. 1012 and *Rajaraja-Pandi-nadu* still later. There were about 100 *nadus* in all. Among them were some with suffix of *nadu*, some with *kūrram*, some with *kulakkil* or *ēri-kil*; *Muttam* and a few *Valanadus*. What were these *nadus*? Were they simply administrative divisions? They were probably at first basic agricultural settlements, nucleating around certain viable areas with common water-source, soil, geographical contiguity etc. For example, Madurai was in the territorial unit called *Mādakkula-kil*, that means a certain tract close to the *Mādakkulam* tank which took sustenance from the tank had certain common links, which bracketed the villages with a *nadu* or *kulakil*-unit. *Nadu* literally means an area with human habitation and civilization as against *Kādu*-(*Kadukonru-Nadakkī*) and these nucleating habitation zones with viable agricultural community became the various *nadus*, which later on assumed administrative character as well. The territorial assembly was called *Nattār*. The *Nattār* was a group of the representatives of the Vellanvagai landlords i.e., *Urar*. Being the influential and authoritative group, by virtue of agricultural land-holdings, they were the people usually addressed by the king, whenever a grant was made. Royal communications were addressed to them.

133 I am thankful to Y. Subbarayalu for permitting me to consult his paper "Some reflections on the territorial units in Pandi-mandalam" Paper read in Pandyan Seminar, Madurai, 1971

Their presence was necessary whenever the boundary of the gifted land was demarcated. This view is corroborated by the Dalavaypuram and Sivakasi plates, where it is expressly stated that the gifted land was delimited in the presence the *Nattars* and *Urar*. They also belonged to the Vellala community who formed a cohesive agricultural group tied together by marriage and other common interests. Sometimes the *Nattars* of several nadus assembled together for common purpose through the assemblies of *Chitra-mēliperianāttar*. An inscription of Jatavarman Sundara calls them as *Nattumakkal* and *Bhumiputtirar* who belonged to the Vellala community as could be seen from their prasastis.¹³⁴ They had a corporate existence. They had the name *Chitrameliperianattar* because of their emblem of plough which they worshipped and adopted as their standard. An inscription describes Vikrama-Pandya as the patron of agricultural community.

The *Nattars* were supreme arbiters over lands of the nadus and the kings had to seek their endorsement for their orders regarding any agricultural undertaking or arrangement. *Valanadus* were there in Pandyanadu even in earlier days, for example, Sri Vallabha-valanadu and Amitaguna-valanadu, Pandi-martanda-valanadu are mentioned in the inscription of Varaguna II and Rajasimha I.¹³⁵

About A.D. 1021, during the time of Rajendra I, the entire Pandi-mandalam was divided into four valanadus—all called after the Chola kings :

1. Rajendra Chola-valanadu ;
2. Madurantaka-valanadu,
3. Mudikonda Chola-valanadu, and
4. Uttama Chola-valanadu

But this arrangement was only a passing phase. It only lasted upto the time of Kulottunga I.

During the Chola occupation of Pandyanadu, they changed the names of mandalams, nadus, villages, towns, temples and even streets. This process of "Cholaisation" is almost like the present day trend of changing the names according to the wishes of the rulers. I will illustrate this by quoting only one example.

¹³⁴ ARE 1936-37, p. 77

¹³⁵ ARE 1921-30, p. 75 ; S. I. I. XIV, No. 93.

An inscription of Sundara Chola Pandya from Mannarkoil in Tirnuelveli district states that the place was called Rajaraja Chaturvedimangalam, the temple was called Rajendra Chola vinnagar in Mullinadu in Mudikonda Chola Valanādu in Rajaraja-Pandinādu. The signatories of this record together with their native address are given.¹³⁶ They are all after the names of Chola kings, queens, daughters and their various titles :

1. Mummudi Chola-cheri.
2. Arulmolidevar-cheri.
3. Nittavinoda-cheri.
4. Sundara Chola-cheri.
5. Vānavan mādevi-cheri.
6. Sembian-madevi-cheri.
7. Kundavvai-cheri.
8. Panchavan-mādevi-cheri.
9. Ulokamādevi-cheri.

Even a street at Ambasamudram was called *Rejendrasola-perunderu*.¹³⁷ A corridor in the temple at Sermadevi was called *Rajadhirajan-tiruchurralai*.¹³⁸ Thus the names of the street, temple, and its parts, the village, the nadu, the mandalam, all underwent a change overnight, the moment the Cholas occupied the Pandyaadesa.

But, after the Pandyas regained control, they again changed all the Chola names, gave them their own names. Thus, we begin to have Vikrama Pandya-valanādu (around Wandiwash in South Arcot 134 of 1956-57) Varaguna-valanadu (119 of 1910) etc. Pandya-Kulasani-valanadu was changed into Pandya-Kulapati-Valanadu. An inscription of Jatavarman Sri Vallabha mentions this reverse trend.

Stone-dam : Parākarama-Pandyan Kallanai ;

Channel : Vira Pandyan-kāl ;

River : Sri Vallabha pērāru.

136 S. I. I. XIV, 145

137 146

138 190

But it must be said that the Pandyas were less fanatical than the Cholas in this race for re-naming the places.

2. Village Sabhas:

The *gramam* or *Ur* was the basic unit of local administration and we get ample evidence to prove that there was a sound system of local administration akin to the contemporary Pallavas and later Chola days. The Manur inscription of Marān Sadaīyan datable to A.D. 800 gives a good picture of the composition of the *Mahasabha* of a Brahmadeya village, its various Committees (*vāriams*), qualification of membership etc., which are very reminiscent of the famous Uttaramerur inscriptions of the Chola days. But this is earlier in point of time and therefore important. Prof. Sastri regretted that its full text was not available or published when he wrote his book.¹³⁹ But the same is now available.¹⁴⁰ The first important point is that it is called *மக்கள் சபை*. It was summoned by beating of a drum — *perunguri Sārri* and met at the stated hour in a public place. Membership was regulated by qualifications of property and learning. There was no election as at Uttiramerur but all important property interests were represented on it, “இவ்வூர் பங்குடையார் மக்கள் சபையில் மன்றடுகிறது”.

They wanted that, among the children of the share-holders, only one who is well behaved and has studied the code of law (*dharma*) may be on the village assembly; that shares purchased or acquired as *stridhana* could entitle one only to full membership in the assembly and in no case half or three-quarter member recognised; such purposes should also elect only such qualified men to represent their shares as have studied a whole *veda*; those who do not possess full membership as laid down cannot stand on any committee (*variyaam*) for the management of the village affairs; that those who satisfy the prescribed conditions and become members should conduct themselves in a proper way and should not blindly oppose the proceedings by saying ‘no, no’ to everything and if they did so they would be punished 5 *kāṣas* on each item

139 Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

140 E. I. XXII, pp. 9-11. Prof. Sastri himself has later edited this inscription in 1938.

(அன்று அன்று குத்துக்கால் செய்வாரையும் குத்துக்கால் செய்வார்க்கு உறவாயுடனிருப்பாரையும்...)

The purpose of this record is obviously to regulate the membership and the composition of *vāriams*. Probably, all propertied people becoming members made the assembly rather an unwieldy body. Again, proceedings of such a large body were bound to run into chaos at certain stage and hence the drastic rules of conduct.

Another interesting inscription regarding the functioning of the Mahasabha has come to light in recent years from Sucindram.¹⁴¹ It is dated kollam 403 — A. D. 1228-29. It records the details of the organisation of the groups of Malayala brahmins from Kilkarai and their representatives in the Mahasabha of the village. They were divided into 8 groups (*adavus*), each belonging to specified houses. The eight members elected from each of the eight houses were authorised by the Mahasabha to assemble and deliberate on matters connected with the temple and the village. They were forbidden from having transactions of any kind in respect of temple lands to their own advantage. In case the of a defaulter, a fine of 12 kalanjus and 5 kānams of gold was imposed and his property could be confiscated by the Sabha.

All Chaturvedimangalams or Brahmadayams had the Sabha. The non-Brahmadaya village had another type of assembly called *Ur* which probably functioned on similar lines. But we do not know much about the proceedings. The *Urar* of Velangudi is mentioned in a record from Tiruppattur taluk in the year 1333. It records the gift of land made by the *Urar* to a leader who did meritorious service to the village in times of confusion.¹⁴² Sivakasi plates (10th century A.D) mention that delimiting the village boundaries was done in the presence of *nattar* of Meluvembanadu and *Urar* of Nalapuram. While *Ur* was the assembly of the village (like the Sabha,) the *Nadu* was bigger assembly which had representatives for several *Urs* and Sabhas. The members of the *nadus* were called *Nattars*.¹⁴³ Periodical meetings of the *nattars* to deliberate on matters of wide interest are recorded.

141 ARE 1958-59, p. 18.

142 *Ibid*, p. 19, and see 275 of 1941 Tiruchendur inscription of Varaguna II describes the functioning of the Mahasabha (E. I. XXI p. 101).

143 1960-61, p. 16

Instances of one single assembly functioning for several villages are also available.¹⁴⁴ The officers of the king in the locality always took the assemblies into their confidence while collecting taxes and remitting them. In one instance certain persons were alleged to have not paid their tax dues and forced to sell their lands to the temple. But when the question was re-examined subsequently by another higher officer and the Bhattas of the assembly, it was found that these persons were not in default. Hence, their lands were ordered to be restored to them.¹⁴⁵

On the whole, we feel that the village-assemblies were functioning actively in Pandimandalam just like their counterparts in the Chola country. But it should be noted that in point of time the village assembly system was earlier in Pandyan country and hence the forerunner of the Chola counterparts.

3. Temple Administration

The temple authorities were variously described as *aganāligaiyar*, *Sri Bandarattār*, *Sri Mahesvaras*, *Sri Vaishnavas* (for Vishnu temples) *Mūlaparishad*. In the Kuttalam temple, *Pāsupata perumakkal* are mentioned as managing the the affairs.¹⁴⁶ The *Mūlaparishad* was an important body immediately in charge of the temple affairs, receiving the endowments, and putting them to proper use as envisaged in the trust, keep their lands, money, jewels etc., in proper custody and even lending on interest for agricultural and trading purposes — all under the general control of the *Maha Sabha* of the village. Generally, *Mūlaparishad* and the *Maha Sabha* find mention as independent bodies, but they functioned often as one unit. A record from Sucindram indicates that *Mūlaparudai Sabha* supervised the affairs of the local temple under the direction of the *Maha Sabha*. It was an executive body under the *Maha Sabha*. In exceptional cases, the *Mūlaparishad* gave over the management of the temple into the hands of the *Maha Sabha*.¹⁴⁷ *Mūlaparishads* at Tiruppattur and Tiruttangal temples were functioning actively. Since the temple was the pivot of the social, cultural and economic life of the village, the temple management

144 26 of 1930-31.

145 ARE 1927-28, p. 57

146 S. I. I. XIV, No. 66

147 185 of 1935-36

had considerable powers not only in religious proceedings etc., but also in other spheres where the temple had a vital role to play.

4. Military System :

A few facts relating to the army organisation and its position in the land may be summed up here. Highest military chief was called *Maha Sāmantan* and he was usually not merely soldier but also a great scholar and cultured man. Such an example we have in *Sāmantan Ganapati* and his brother *Etti Sattan* who were intellectuals and military officers as well. Similarly, *Māran Kāri* the Chief Minister had a distinguished military career as attested by the *Velvikkudi* grant. Many warriors came from the Brahmin class also such as *Māran Kāri* himself (under *Varaguna I*), *Narayana Cholāntaka-Brahmarayan* under *Vira Pandia*¹⁴⁸ and *Aryan Charkravarti*, the military commander of *Maravarman Kulasekhara* who had a triumphant march to Ceylon. *Parakrama Narayana Brahmasrirajan* was a *Dandanāyakan* (captain of a regiment) under *Vikrama Chola Pandya* (S. I. I. XIV, No. 189). Similarly, *Sridharan Mantri Einyan* was a *maha-sāmantan* of the *Pandyan* army. Many top military men who served under *Nadunjadiyan Parantaka I* came from the *Vaidya Kula* of *Karavandapuram*, which was a fortified town with military garrison stationed there.¹⁴⁹ These military people have done many pious benefactions like excavation of cave temples of *Anaimalai* (by *Māran Kāri*) *Tirupparankundram* (by *Sāmantan Ganapati*) etc. They were honoured with titles like *Mūvenda-mangalappērariyan*, *Pāndi-malangappērariyan*, *Pāndimartamangalappērariyan*, *Viramangalappērariyan*, *Pāndi Ilangomangalappērariyan*.

Nakkan Pullan was the leader of the *Pandyan* army during *Varaguna II*'s successful campaign at *Idavai*. We have already made a reference to the fact that successive members of the entire *Pallivelān* family served as military officers and commanders under successive *Pandyan* kings — *Varaguna I*, *Srimāra Sri Vallabha*, and *Varaguna II*.

From this we can know that certain families dedicated themselves to military service and this passed on from father to son and also

148 ARE 1958-59, p. 16

149 K. V. Raman, *Karavandapuram — A fortified Pandyan Town* J. I. H Jubilee vol.

brothers. On the whole, the evidence suggests that military commanders and the army under them were loyal to the ruling king. Usurpation by military leaders so common in Vijayanagar and Muslim period was something unheard of in the Pandyan history. Only the fight between the ruling brothers created confusion periodically. Even in that stage coup or usurpation did not occur. It is a tribute to the loyalty and discipline of the Pandyan military chiefs.

This fidelity to the master is well illustrated by the two hero stones found at Viliinjam with *vattellettu* inscriptions. The hero is stated to have discharged his debt (*Senjorrupperunkadan*) by giving up his life for the sake of his master, probably a Pandyan king. A similar hero-stone of Māranjadaian records that when the Chera forces attacked Karai-kottai, a Ulvittu Sevaka, Ranakirti gave up his life (ARE 1958-59, p. 16).

The Pandyan kings seem to have placed military posts and garrisons at different parts of the realm particularly in strategic places. Very often, the regiments also looked after the law and order of certain localities or helped the local officers in the administration. We have already mentioned about the fortified town of Uggrankottai under the charge of certain military officers. Sometimes, certain areas were assigned to a body of army as fief and they were in charge of collecting taxes under the orders of the king. Such regiments were called *Padaikkaranavar*. We have a record of 13th century (Mar. Kulasekhara) from Tiruvadavūr which carries the royal order assigning certain taxes of the locality in favour of the local temple. The order was addressed to the *Padaikkaranavar* who were probably the accountants or executive authority of the regiments stationed there. This village must have formed part of their fief. They were responsible for the payment of taxes due from the village.¹⁵⁰

At Anaiyur near Madurai, a Pandyan regiment was stationed. The temple records frequently mention the *Padaittalaivars* as being entrusted with the gifts and endowments meant for the temple.¹⁵¹ Similar instances of the *Padaittalaivars* looking after the temple or

150 ARE 1962-63 p. 82

151 *Ibid*, No. 506 496-92 of 1958-59; S. I. I. V, 451-54; E. I. V, p. 44

village administration are noticed at Tiruvidaiyaputtur, Kottar and Sucindram. The reasons for such a system are not clear. The king himself might have made the arrangement or the people themselves would have asked for the protection for their villages and temple etc., especially in certain dangerous times and would have willingly contributed towards the expenses of maintaining the regiment in the village.

Perumpadaiyar and Valangai-māsenaiyar :

Some interesting information has come to light about certain military bodies during late Pandyan time. They were: *Murpērpadaī* — *Valavam Ullitta Perumpadaiyar* and *Valangai māsenaiyār*. It appears that some lands of the village were being enjoyed on military tenure by a contingent of the Pandyan army stationed at Perungulam.

This body *Perumpadaiyar* appears to have had the same corporate existence and status of a village-sabha and was composed of representatives from several regiments and battalions of the army. As many as 8 such regiments are mentioned. They managed the affairs of their contonmen and also the temple whose deity is called their special deity. They had the Captain, *Senāpati*, a military accountant by name *Padaikkanakku*. The eight regiments are called *Mudalām padai*, *Irاندām-padai* etc. Another record mentions the cantonment board as *Arāchinā-yagam*. The *Murperpadai* may correspond to *mummudi dandas* of the Kannada country.¹⁵² A battalion stationed at Nanguneri was called *Iranasinga-viron terinda-villigal*.

5. *King's Officers*

We will now briefly see the nature of the set up at the headquarters, about which not much is known. The king was advised by ministers (*mantrins*)¹⁵³ and there was perhaps more than one Chief Minister (*Uttaramantri*).¹⁵⁴ In an inscription of Mar. Kulasekhara I, one Vānadarayan Kāligarayan is mentioned as *Ekamantrin*.¹⁵⁵ A *Mahamātra* is also mentioned (S. I. I. XIV, 246). *Senapati* was probably the captain of a battallion, while *Maha-sāmantan* was the commander-

152 ARE 1932-33, p. 69

153 1927-28 p. 56

154 ARE, 1929-30, No. 273

155 ARE 1949-50, II

in-chief of the army. Many important officers of the realm were simply called *Kalingarayan*, *Malavarayan*, *Pallavarayan*, *Munaiyadraiya*. The king first communicated his orders to them. It may be interesting to know that Pandyan thrones were also called by the same names. The royal office or a secretariat where the orders were drafted was called *eluttumandapa*.¹⁵⁶ The darbar hall was called by different names such as *Alagia-Pāndyan-kūdam*, *manābharanan-tirumāligai* etc.

Tiruvāsal-mudali is mentioned as an officer of the king's household.¹⁵⁷ Similarly *agappariyāra-mudali*.¹⁵⁸ A lady of the king's household by name *Tiruvudaiyal* is mentioned.¹⁵⁹ Certain executive officers who carried out the king's orders called *Mugavetti* of the *Puravuaritinaikalam*.¹⁶⁰ The latter seems to have been the highest revenue body akin to our Revenue Board. The head of this board was called *Tinaikala-nāyakam*. *Nadu-vagai-saiyōr* were the important revenue officers and surveyors of lands in the nadu who sorted them according to their grade and fixed taxes etc. *Variyilar*¹⁶¹ were the revenue accountants who kept the details of revenues for each village and *nādu*. The title deeds of donated lands were signed by them. *Mudali* is mentioned as a tax officer.¹⁶² All copper plates of the Pandyas are couched in beautiful Sanskrit and Tamil and many times in the *manipravāla* style, clearly indicating that both the languages held place of high honour. The composers of both were rewarded and respected. The Tamil portion of the Velvikudi grant was composed by Enadi Sattan Sattan, who was also a high ranking military officer of the realm. He was the brother of Sattan Ganapati, the *mahasāmantan* of Nedunjadaiyan Parāntaka. Similarly, Etti Chāttan, a high ranking officer under Srimāran Sri Vallabha was a renowned Tamil poet who came in the line of Sangam poets. Sri Vallabha's son Parantaka Vira Narayana called himself as *Sentamil-kōn*. In his Dalavaypuram grant he paid high tributes to the composers of Sanskrit and Tamil portion

156 243 of 1939-60

157 42 of 1946-47

158 218 of 1929-30

159 275 of 1941-42

160 212 of 1932-33

161 314 of 1949-50

162 94 of 1933-34

and rewarded them “இதற்குச் செப்பேடு வாசகத்தை ஆரியம் விராய்த்தமிழ் தொடுத்த ...” The Pandyan kings considered Sanskrit and Tamil with equal respect and regard. This is evident in all their inscriptions and titles. The beautiful Sanskrit and Tamil equivalents used drive home this point. To cite a few examples :

Solantalai konda	:	Solāntaka
Emmandalamnm-kondaruliya :		Sakalabhuvana Chakravarti
Ponmeinda Perumal	:	Hemachandanarāja
Gajādhyaksha	:	Anai Olukku
Dramila Maharaja		Tamil Pēraraiyan
Nadu-nilai-nāyakam	:	Madhyastha

The king's love for taking both Sanskrit and Tamil titles is best illustrated in the Dalavaypuram plates. It gives the various titles of Viranarayana such as: Kūdalkōn, Srinikētan, Sri Parāntaka, Gurucharidan, Sentamil-kōn.*

The point to be noted is that a sort of liberal bilingualism prevailed in their administrative documents.

Araiys were probably of ministers' rank advising the king on matters of welfare activities, endowment etc. There were *Araiys*, *Pēraraiys*, *Vijayaraiys*, *Tennan Tamilvel*, *Tennavan Brahmarayan*, *Pandya Viluppēraraiys*, *Pāndi Pallavaraiyass*, *Pandya Kongaraiys*, *Nānji-nāḍālvān*. They often figures in inscriptions as those at whose request king made certain endowments, or exempted taxes etc. Evidently they were the king's representatives or officers serving in the various regions and advising the king. For example, Nānji-nāḍālvān was in

*The Sinnamanur Plates of Rajasimha affords eloquent proof for this : It describes the services of the Pandyan kings to Tamil and Sanskrit. It says :

வளமதுரை நகர் கண்டும் மற்றதற்கு மதில் வகுத்தும்
உளமிக்க மதியதனு லொண்டமிழும் வடமொழியும் பழுதறத்
தானுராய்து பண்டிதரின் மேன்தோன்றியும் etc., In another
context மகாபாரதம் தமிழ்ப்படுத்து மதுராபுரி சங்கம் வைத்
தும் etc.

charge of Nanjilnādu. Kongaraiyan might have served in the Kongu-nadu or might have hailed from Kongu-nadu. *Nyyattar* and *Nyaya-paripalana-perunderu* are mentioned. In was evidently a judicial body.¹⁶³ They can be compared to the District Collectors who served as the channel of communication between the king and the nadus. Many aspects of Pandyan administration system remain obscure still. Much work remains to be done in this field.

6. Taxation :

Much is already known about the various taxes collected from the people like *Kadamai*, *antarayam*, *uludukkudi*, *pādikkāval*, *tattāra pettam*, *inavari*, *idai-vari* etc. We have heard of *tari-irai*, a tax on the weavers, *panjupili* a tax on cotton or textiles. A tax on pearl-fishery was called *Sālapattevai* collected from the Nattar of Kuda-nadu.¹⁶⁴ Some special taxes like *tulābhāra-vari*, *abhisheka-kāni* are mentioned to have been collected on the occasion of a festival. The king gifted these taxes to the temple.¹⁶⁵ One of the usual ways by which the king showed his benefaction either to a temple or to a distinguished service or a scholar was to make tax-free gift of land. In times of drought, tax exemptions were freely made. Tax evasion was often punished with confiscation of land and property and making it to the local temple. The people showed their protest by migrating to other places.

There are instances of the Sabha expressing concern about heavy taxation. Once, on account of the rise in taxes, the Sabha had to cut its contribution to the local temple. Usually, in any assessment or re-assessment of land tax, the *Nattars*, the *Ur* and the *Sabhā* were consulted and taken into confidence. Land tax was the main source. Only cultivated lands were taxed according to their *taram*. During the time of Vira Pandya (13th century A.D.) on each *ma*, 1/4 *kāsu* and 4 *kalams* of paddy was levied as tax. ¹⁶⁶ Instances of heavy taxation are available. As the villagers could not pay during the time of Maravarman Sundara II, his officer revised the taxes on taxable lands

163 94 of 1933

164 432 of 1929-30

165 Ibid, p. 75-76

166 1936-37, p. 74-75.

after re-surveying with 18 ft. pole, and exempted the uncultivated lands.¹⁶⁷

7. Land Measures and Other Measures

There was a good land-survey system. Lands were measured by certain standard - measures like 24 feet *kōl*, 18 feet *kōl* etc., and they were also periodically changed. During the time of Maravarman Sundara I a new lineal measure called *kudi-tāngi* which measured 24 span in length was introduced in the place of the older rod which measured only 18 spans. With this new measure, the lands were surveyed and taxes re-assessed, under the orders of Kalavayil-nādālvān who communicated it to the Nattars.¹⁶⁸

Again during the reign of his successor Jatavarman Kulasekhara I, the measure *kudi-tāngi* was again increased by 1/4 of its length by the orders of the same chieftain.¹⁶⁹

During Maravarman Kulasekhara's time the measuring rod was called *Arulniti*.¹⁷⁰ Later records mention the measure *Sundara-pandyan-kōl*¹⁷¹ of 24 feet length and another *Virā-Pandyan kōl*¹⁷² of 18 feet. Thus 18 and 24 feet seem to have been the basic standard though they underwent slight increase or decrease and they were named after the ruling kings.

8. Coins

Though numerous coins have been discovered in Pandyanadu, they are mostly of late period and some non-descript and difficult for classification because of the lack of legends. Particularly, early coins are indeed rare. The rectangular or square copper coins with double fish on one side and the elephant surrounded by the *ashtamangalas* are probably the earliest and they are rightly ascribed to the Sangam period. They are exactly like their counterparts of the early Cholas of the same period. Though they are ubiquitous and found in baskets in

167 715 of 1962-63.

168 1936-37, p. 74.

169 329 of 1959-60

170 48 of 1928-29

171 521 of 1962-63

172 715.

65034



the Vaigai bed, none of them has any legend on them. But variations in their size, shape and the symbols may perhaps indicate the various denominations. The coin *anai-achchu* referred to in the inscription might be a reference to this elephant coin. Some gold coins with fish but without any legend have been ascribed to the Pandyas. From Sangam literature we learn *Kānam*, *kāsu* etc., were gold coins. It would indeed be a great discovery if we could find early coins with the Brahmi letters. There is every likelihood of this.

Regarding the Pandyas of Kadungon line, we get a reference to the coin named *Avanipasekharan-Golaga* which was a copper coin issued probably by Srimaran Sri Vallabha who had the title *Avanipasekhara*.¹⁷³ In the records of Varaguna II we get reference to *kāsu* and *palan-kāsu*.¹⁷⁴ Recently, a round gold coin of Varaguna II (Acc. A.D. 862-) has been identified in the collection at the National Museum, New Delhi. It has two carps vertically placed on one side and on the reverse is found in clear bold grantha characters the name-*Sri Varaguna* in one straight line. Varaguna's lavish endowment to the Tiruchendur temple included 1400 gold *kāsus* and his endowment to Ambasamudram included 290 gold *kāsus*. Another record mentions that one gold *kāsu* was one *Kalanju* in weight.¹⁷⁵ There is the other type of gold coins, the Pandya *Dhananjaya* coins with fish on the obverse and the legend "Sri Pandya *Dhanajaya*" on reverse in Nagari Characters. It is doubtful if these were Pandyan imperial issues.¹⁷⁶ An early 9th century Pandyan record mentions *dinaras* and *kāsus* were endowed to a temple.¹⁷⁷ The *dinaras* were current in Pandyan country in the 14th century also since Wassaf mentions it, as coins of red gold.¹⁷⁸ The early ones were evidently the imported Roman gold coins which were widely current in South India as the one mentioned in Ikshvaku inscription. They were valued for the bullion content.

I have collected from the inscriptions a few variety of coins that were current during the 10th century.

173 Desikachari, *S. Indian coins*, Pl. III, 65

174 ARE 1928-29, p. 66

175 R. Vanaja, *A Gold coin of Varaguna*, J.N.S.I. XXXII, pt. I

176 E.I. XXI, No. 17

177 R. Vanaja, *op. cit.*

178 K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.* p. 192.

1. *achchu*: Referred to in many inscriptions of the 10th century in the records of Solan-talai-konda Vira Pandya.¹⁷⁹ We do not know the value but a later record says $1\frac{3}{4}$ *achchu* is equal to 102 *panam*.

2. *ānai-achchu* — 6th year of Jatavaraman Sri Vallabha S.I.I. XIV No. 212.

3. *Kāsu* or *sempōn kāsu* and *panam* (*Ibid*, 533 and 244) From Varaguna's record we learn that 10 *pon* = 1 *kāsu* = 1 *kalanju* of gold (No. 231).

4. *Palankāsu* the old *kāsu* was of greater value. For endowing one or two lamps 3 *palankāsus* would do, whereas for the same purpose 1000 current *kāsus* were needed.

5. *Drahmam*; One old *kāsu* = $1\frac{1}{2}$ *drahmam*. (No. 243)

6. *Kānam* = 1 *pon*.

In later inscriptions besides the general term *kāsus*, *panam*, *palankāsu* etc., we come across the following names.

7. *Pudu kulugai panam* current in Jatavarman Vira Pandya's record at Madurai (273 of 1941-42)

8. *Danapālan-kulugai* — Same king — current in Tirunelveli district (54 of 1944-45).

9. *Anrada narpudu kāsu* — Same king.

10. *Palam-Soliyakkāsu* — Same king.

11. *Vira-Pandyan kāsu* (*Ibid*),

12. *Palamudal-ānai-achhu* — Maran Sundara's time; 22 *veli* and 6 *ma* of land obtained for 55 *palamudal anai-achhu* (312 of 1949-50).

13. *Ellan Talaiyāna*

Coins of Jatavarman Sundara with legends such as *astKaliyugarāman*, *kachi-valangum-perumāl* etc., are well known to us. Similarly, later coins with legends like *Samara kōlāhalan*, *Bhuvanaika vīran* are also known. The latter was an issue by Maravarman Kulasekhara I. His son Jatavar-

179 ARE, 1958-59, p. 16.

man Sundara III issued the coin bearing the legend *Kodandarāman*. A record dated *kollam* 589 i.e., A.D. 1413, mentions a coin issued by a Tirunelveli Perumal Vira Pandyan named *Neumeni Kaliyuga Raman*.¹⁸⁰ The place name Nemeni prefixed probably indicates that it was minted at this place. The same coin mentioned in a later record also dates Kollam 733 = A.D. 1558.¹⁸¹

Some coins of foreign origin also found their way into Pandyanadu. We have already mentioned about the presence *dinaras* as early as 9th century, if not earlier. The *Drahman* was another. Besides these, the Roman gold and silver coins were possessed for their metal value but never current as coins. Coins from Ceylon were familiar here and they were called *Ilakkasu*. Ceylon Coin *kaha-pana*, issued by Parakrama Bahu was ordered to be current in Pandyan country when the Ceylon king invaded Madurai against Kulasekaran.

Public Works:

Government took interest in fostering agriculture by affording irrigational facilities. This took mainly two forms — either digging a channel from a nearby river or excavating a lake with sluice. Seliyan Sendan excavated a channel and built a sluice.¹⁸² During Srimāran Sri Vallabha's time his general Etti Sattan of Iruppaikudi did extensive irrigation works. He improved tanks called *Tirumāl-ēri*, *Maran-ēri* in the arid tract.

An officer of Vikrama Pandya dug a channel and built a sluice for it to carry the water from river Pennai for irrigating the lands of Tiruvannamalai.¹⁸³

At Silaiman, near Madurai, an inscription of Kulasekhara dated S' 1134 (= A.D. 1212) mentions that the Manābharana Mūvēndavār of Kappalur, an officer excavated a channel called Tyāganchiriya-pērāru from the river Vaigai.¹⁸⁴

180 725 of 1962-63; Mint is mentioned as *Karukalattu adikkum panam* ARE 1943-45 p. 60-61.

181 309 of 1963-44;

182 1961-62, p. 82;

183 200 of 1934-35.

184 33 3of 1961-62

An epigraph of 11th century from Kuruvithurai (Nilakkottai taluk) mentions *Parakrama Pandyan Kallanai*, *Vira-Pandian-kāl*, *Sri Vallaba pēraru*. *Parakrama-Pandya Perāru* is also mentioned.¹⁸⁸ Vasudevan (under Srivallabha) repaired the channel and named it *Vāsudevappērār*.

Besides rivers and channels, tank irrigation was widely popular. Madakkulam, near Madurai figures in many ancient records. We hear of *Parāntaka-pērēru* near Uggrankottai. The local sabhas had *erivariyam* to look after the maintenance of the lake, -strengthening of the bund in rainy days etc.

10. Conclusion :

The foregoing facts are only glimpses of the Pandyan administrative system. There is scope for considerable work in this field, especially because of the epigraphical records are enormous now. But even the glimpses given above give us the impression of the soundness of this administrative system. Though it was a monarchy, it was regulated by code of law and *dharma*. Monarchs were all enlightened and properly advised by the highly educated and cultured Uttaramantrins. The military generals were not merely soldiers but also intellectuals. The state was not functioning in the ivory tower. There was a continuous dialogue between the administration and the people in whose welfare the kings took a keen interest. The stone records of the times are full of royal concessions, and exemptions, land-donations etc., to various sections of the society and cultured institutions. Names like *Madappuram*, *Pallichandam* (land grant for Jain establishment), *Devadānam*, *Tiruvīdaiyattam* (tax free gift lands to the temples) *Tiruppanippuram* grants for the repairs and renovations to the religious establishments, *kūttu-kāni* (lands assigned to the artistes) *Pulamai-vritti* (gifts for scholars), *Battavritti* etc. would all go to show how the monarchs gave sustenance and encouragement to educational, cultural and religious institutions. They honoured the military commanders with title *Enadi* and gave land-grants. They were constantly in touch with the country side through the sabhas, the Urs and the Nattars without whose endorsement they did not do any drastic changes in the land revenue and other vital matters. There was considerable scope for local self-government by the village assemblies which practically looked after all

their day to day affairs without external interference and that the assembly not only represented all local interests but also was composed of qualified persons. As the Manur record says, the Sabhas were *Makkal-Sabhai* but regulated by certain qualifications of character and discipline. Similarly, the central Government with the enlightened king at the apex, ably assisted by qualified Uttaramantrins, Nādālvans etc., was a source of strength and stability. The Pandyan monarchy was rooted in the popular will of the people. Hardly we come across any tyrannical ruler. Though we do get instances of race for power and a few succession disputes, they are extremely few considering the length of their rule. In fact, in their copper plates, each takes pride in mentioning his predecessor and his achievements in the political and cultural spheres. There is no evidence to show that there was ever a tyrant among the Pandyas. The emphasis was on the welfare and good administration. Stability and efficient administration at the centre and local initiative at the village level and a good co-ordination between these two levels contributed to the success and soundness of the administration. It was an enlightened monarchy with the welfare of the people as its ideal.

LECTURE II

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS

1. FORMATION OF SETTLEMENT AND COLONISATION:

In Pandyanadu, the fertile plains of Tambraparani had attracted haman settlement more than other parts. The next focus centre was on the banks of the Vaigai. Other arid parts of Madurai and Ramathapuram districts did not afford facilities for any large scale habitation. That is why, comparatively speaking, we do not find such a concentration of the Brahmadeya villages and temples as we get in the districts of Thanjavur and Tiruchi. From the Pandyan records, we come to understand, however, that there was a conscious attempt by the Pandyan kings to attract the Brahmins to come and settle down in different parts of their realm for which they were given lavish Brahmadeya villages, or Chaturvedimangalams, tax-exemptions etc. Similarly, the Pandyan kings tried to attract the trading community also so that commerce would grow. Thurston in his "Castes and Tribes" has recorded the tradition that about Kali 3808 a Pandyan king named Sundara Pandya asked the Chola king to induce some Vaisyas to settle down in the Pandyan country. They settled down in the country north of the Vaigai river, east of Piranmalai and south of Vellar.

An inscription of Maravarman Sundara also mentions the settlement of the Rajanārāyanapuram branch of Nagarattar community.¹

Brahmadeya:

Several instances of the kings inviting the Brahmins to settle down in different places and giving them lands for the purpose are recorded.

Kattarimangalam in Tiruchendur taluk was ordered by Vikrama Pandya to be called as Vikrama Pandya Chaturvedimangalam and 64 Brahmins well versed in the *Vedas* and sastras were settled down there."

A record of the same king from Tiruppachetty refers to the formation of a new colony of 46 Malayala Brahmins from Malaimandalam.

1 ARE 1935-36, p. 80

2 377 of 1929-30.

This was done because the population of the village had become much decimated and this was represented to the king. He arranged for reorganisation of the village and settling of the Malayala Brahmins of the neighbouring district. For this, the village was marked out, lands measured, necessary channels dug and sluices built and house sites and lands were apportioned to the new colonists. A temple was also built and it was called Malaimandala-Vinnagar Alvar.³

A number of *agarams* founded by Jatavarman Sundara (Acc. A.D. 1303) who had the title 'Kodandrama' are recorded. In South Arcot region, lands were sold to the Brahmins, and their *agaram* was called Kodandarama-Chaturvedimangalam after the king. The lands were purchased from *Bhumiputtirar* or Nattumakka] who had enjoyed the tenancy rights of the village and who were all Vellalas and who formed the body — *Chitramēli* — *Perianāttār*.⁴ This example however would show the creation of Brahmadeyas was done with the endorsement of the agricultural community who had the tenancy rights of the lands.

Vānādarayan Kālingarayan, an important minister under Māra-varman Kulasekhara I established several *agraharams* at different places and built temples for the memory of the king.⁵

Avanivēndarāman-Chaturvedimangalam in Ayakkudi was formed in the name of the king in Vaigainādu by settling 128 Brahmins. Land was made tax free.⁶

During the time of Jatavarman Sundara (Ac. 1261) a new village was founded by clubbing a few together and settling in them a number of Brahmins. It was to be called Sundara Pandya-Chaturvedimangalam. 200 *vēlis* of lands were distributed to 121 Brahmins who were teachers of *vedas* and also others like the *Vaidya*, accountant, carpenter, black-smith, *uvachchas*, barber, mid-wife, vettiyan etc. Provision was also made for a grazing ground, crematorium etc.⁷

3 1928-29, p. 68-69

4 1936-37 p. 77-78

5 1949-50

6 1955-56, II.

7 ARE 1958-59, p. 18

Another record mentions the foundation of the villages called Avani-muladudaiyal-Chaturvedimangalam and Bhuvanamulududaiyal-Charurvedimangalam, apparently after the queens of the Pandya kings.⁸

The newly formed villages were around the temple and had facilities of water, cultivable lands etc.

2. CIVIC AMENITIES IN THE VILLAGES AND TOWNS :

Interesting is the reference to street lights on the roads. There were separate streets for different classes of society. *Nānādesipperunderu* would show they were occupied by the merchant class. *Sāliyar-teru* is mentioned as the quarters for weavers.

Water-sheds :

A record from Dalapadisamudram mentions the provision made for street lights and also for the maintenance of two persons to look after the water-sheds called *Rājākkar-tannīrpandal* and another called *Munnūruvaṇṇerumpandal*, presumably after the guild or regiment of 300 persons. To open water-sheds at convenient intervals along the important highways was a popular form of benefaction in the olden days.

Merchant community :

As pointed out earlier, the early Tamil Brahmi inscriptions themselves contain evidence of merchants and merchant guilds doing benefactions to the monastic resorts. There was a guild at Vellarai near Madurai called *Nigamattor*.⁹ In later epigraphs we get very good evidence for the active part played by the merchant organisations like *Nānādesis*, *Manigrāmattar*, *Ainūrruvar* etc. We get evidence of the merchant and artisan people colonising in different parts along the east coast. A 10th century record from Sirudavur in Chingleput district registers donation for a Vishnu temple from a merchant from Pandya-mandala. A 14th century record also refers to the colony of settlers.¹¹ In Chingleput district itself places like Chintamani, Mylapur, Tiruvot-

8 *Ibid.*

9 1928-29, p. 67.

10 I. Mahadevan *Corpus ap. cit.*

11 ARE, 1933-34, p. 35

tiyur, Tiruvadandai, Mahabalipuram, all on the sea-coast were great centres of commercial activity, as could be judged from the inscription of these places. The big temples in the tract could be built and maintained only owing to the philanthropy of the thriving mercantile population.

Ariviyur near Sivapuri was called Desi-Uyyavanadān-pattanam and it was a place of some commercial importance. There was in it a street named *Nānādesippperunderu*. A number of merchants figure as donors to the local tank here.¹² Early inscriptions at Uggirankottai mention the benefactions to the temple made by the Nagarattar, the pre-eminent merchant community of Pandyanādu.¹³ They built a corridor in the local Siva temple and it was named *Nagarattar-Tiruchurrālai*.

A record of Māvarman Sundara (13th century) from Pillaiyarpatti in Ramanathapuram district gives interesting information about the Nagarattar community. It speaks about the origin of Rajanārayanapuram branch of the Nagarattar.¹⁴ It states that the Nagarattar settled in *Ainūrruppperunderu* in Erukankudi and purchased some lands at Marudangudi for founding a new colony called Rajanārayanapuram. It was one of the nine places where the present Nattukottai Chettiars colonised in the Pandyanādu. The present record gives the approximate date of the colonisation of one branch in the first quarter of the 13th century. The Nagarattars were in charge of a number of temples. They even had the right of collecting certain levies for certain festivals.

On the festival occasion the deity was to be heralded as *Danmadavalavan-tambiran*. Evidently Pillaiyarpatti was one of the 64 *taṣalams* or merchant communities who organised themselves as associate bodies of the *Tisaiāyirattainnūrruwar*.¹⁵ We get good many references to this body *āyirattainnūrruwar*, *āyirattu-elenūrruwar* etc. They were evidently corporate bodies comprising of leading merchants. The temple at Sivapuri was called *Ayirattainnurruva-Iṣṣaram-Udaiyar*.¹⁶ A record of Maravarman

12 ARE, 1928-29, p. 68, and S. I. I. XIV, 213.

13 199 of 1935-36.

14 ARE, 1935-36, P. 23

15 ARE, 1960-61, p. 23

16 1928-29. p. 68

Kulasekharan I mentions a toll collected on articles of merchandise to the temple by the regional representatives of the great organisations like • *Tisaiyayirattu annüruvār* and *Chitramēli-perianāttar*. The *manigrāmam* of Kodumbalur was one of them. Other centres of these merchant guilds were Uraiyur, Rajasekharapuram in Malainādu etc.¹⁷ Ayyapolil was another guild that was functioning in Periakulam area.¹⁸

• *Prasasti of a merchant guild:*

Another inscription of the same king datable to A.D. 1318 contains an interesting *prasasti* of the *Vanianagarattar* in the 18 districts (*Padinen-Bhūmi*) on both the banks of the Kaveri. It claims all mythological associations like the Garuda, their flag, the Pampa, their river, Jayavarman, their elephant etc.¹⁹

Another record of 13th century from Kiramangalam states that the Nagarattar of several places met and agreed to provide for the daily worship and upkeep of the temple tank called the *Nānādesam* by a levy on their imports. It seems to have been a self-imposed levy for a good cause.²⁰ Another record from the same place mentions that the mercantile communities *Padinen-Vishāyattār* (of 18 districts) provided for the worship in the temple.²¹ Velangudi in Tiruppattur taluk had a merchant colony. It figures in an inscription as Vaniyanagaram and the merchant of the place had even the *padikkaval* rights. A record from this place mentions the donation of a pearl merchant of Kaliyamangalam and his name was Alagianayan-Valai-vīṣuvān.²² For a similar purpose of renovating an old temple in Ramanathapuram district, members of 18 vishayas attended a meeting and among them, were the *Valanjiyar* of South Ceylon, *Anjuvannam* and *Manigramam*, all self regulating corporations of different classes of merchants.^{22a}

Social groups:

Regarding the social set up, nothing new need be said. It was essentially an orthodox, conservative set up based on the caste system

17 286 of 1964-65

18 S. I. I. XIV, 251

19 1960-61, p. 23

20 ARE, 1935-36, p. 81

21 *Ibid*, No. 162

22 503 of 1958-59

22a 598 of 1926

with all its good features and also the draw-backs. We get reference, to the well known social groups Valangai and Idangai groups – which were very conscious of their rights and privileges and which represent roughly the agricultural class on one side and the industrial or the artisan class on the other. The constant rivalry between them in later history is well known. They are recorded even in Vijayanagar inscriptions. We do not know about their position in earlier times. They seem to have claimed certain amount of autonomy to have their own rules and regulations of conduct, often defying the king's orders. But the evidence is not so clear in the Pandyan records as they are in the Chola ones. However, a record of Jatavarman Sri Vallabha from Tenkarai (Periakulam taluk) appears to record certain rules framed by them.²³ But the record is fragmentary and hence we are not able to understand its significance. The guild *ayyapofil* and its association with the temple is mentioned. We have already made reference to the respectable place of the agriculturists in the society. The merchant community, the artisan classes were also having their recognised importance in the village community.

Sati system :

Sati system which was one of the evils of our social system does not appear to have been prevalent in Tamil country in any appreciable manner. We get indeed only rare instances. The classical instance is of Vanavan Mahadevi, the queen of Sundara Chola Parantaka II who entered fire on the death of her husband. In the *Purananuru*, Perungoppendu, a Pandyan queen is said to have done likewise. But, probably this was confined only to the royal class. The common folk do not appear to have practised it. But in one of the more recently discovered records from Tiruppulisvaram in Tirunelveli Dt. registers a gift of an individual to the deity for the merit of his daughter who entered fire as sati.²⁴ This is one of the few such rare instances.

Refugee colonies :

We get a few references to certain places called *anjinān-pugalidam* i.e., "asylum for the oppressed" the full significance of which is not known to us. Sundara Pandyanallur near Tellaru in South Arcot is

23 S. I. I. XIV, 251

24 363 of 1959-60

mentioned as one. Such people who probably left their original places out of some fear or oppression, were rehabilitated in the new colonies with some tax concessions. An inscription from Sucindram records the founding of a similar *anjān-pugalidam* around the temple at Sucindram.²⁵ Quite likely, the people of the border areas crossed the borders to escape oppressive taxation. But full picture is not available. It might also be due to drought in certain areas, the people might have migrated to better areas temporarily.

Famine :

A record datable to A. D. 1227 informs us that at Ilayangudi there was a famine in the village and in order to relieve the distress, the residents even sold some of the jewels belonging to the temple. In the next year, when normal conditions returned, they restored the ornaments to the deity.²⁶

Self immolation :

Another rather repulsive system of self-immolation is recorded in South Arcot region.²⁷ But it was not popular and was only a rare happening. A male *devar-adigar* of the temple cut off his head and sacrificed his life, probably in fulfilment of a vow on the completion of the *mandapa*, which was long lying incomplete. For this act, some 1000 *kulis* of land was granted as *Udirapatti* to the sons of the deceased in grateful memory of his heroic act of self-immolation. Another type of self-immolation is reported at Tirupparankunram. During the Muslim attacks, some devotees are said to have fallen from the gopura, as a sort of expiation to keep them away from temples. But such instances were fortunately rare.

3. CULTURAL ASPECTS :

Music, Dance and Learning

We have some interesting details regarding many aspects of cultural life of the people. From an inscription of the 13th century from Attur near Tirunelveli, we learn that there was a theatrical hall

25 474 of 1958-59

26 291 of 1949-50

27 197 of 1944-35

and a troupe of actors and actresses to enact dramas (*nātakas*) on the occasion like *Avani-tirunāl*. Some lands were given as gift to the actors and actresses and such assignments were known as *kūttādu-kāni*.²⁸ Drama is referred to as *Tirunātakam*, sacred drama, implying thereby that it was with a religious or puranic theme. The hall was called *Alagiapandyankūdam*. Gifts to the *Sāntikūttan* and one actress by name *Tirumēni-piriyādāl* are recorded. A record of A. D. 1425 from Tiruchendur speaks of gifts for dancing girls to do service by dancing during *mahāpūja* and *andikkāppu*.²⁹

Two records of Māravarman Kulasekhara (Acc. 1268) from Minakshi temple at Madurai speak of endowments of land as *Jivita* to a musician called Periyān. He was given the title *Pandya Vellānai-venra-pāndya-vādyamarayar*. Another record speaks of similar grant to eleven musicians of the temple. The names and number of musical instruments used by them are given as *Viramaddalam*, *maddalam*, *timilai*, *semakkalam*, *kasi* and *tiruchinnam*.³⁰ At Attur, *Sāntikūttan* is mentioned i.e., one who enacted *Santikuttu*, a variety of dance and stage-play.³¹ There was a theatre (*nātakasālai*) within the palace at Madurai.³²

Learned people were patronised by lavish gifts of lands and other needs. Varaguna I prided himself as *Pandita-vatsala*, lover of scholars. The number of Chaturvedimangalams, Brahmadayas and Bhattarvrittis recorded in the inscriptions testify to the patronage of the learned people. Gift for scholars is mentioned as *Pulamai-eritti*.³³ Tax exemptions for their lands are recorded. Every king boasts that he created many Brahmadeya and performed so many *yajnas*. Selian Sendan, for example, declares that he performed so many *Hiranyagarbhas*, *Tulābharas*, etc. Similar claims we get in Velvikudi and other records. These would show also their unshakable faith in the orthodox Hindu rituals. Almost all the Pandyan copper plates were issued in favour of the learned people. The Sivakasi grant was for Vāsudeva-Bhattan in appreciation of his composition of a prasasti in the *anushtub*. The plate

28 444 and 445 of 1929-30

29 365 of 1949-50

30 1939-40, p. 249

31 S. I. I. XIV, No. 237

32 *Ibid*, 254

33 248 of 1929-30

calls Madurai as Tamilkkūdal, clearly supporting the tradition that it was a great seat of Tamil learning — where Tamil poets met, vying for recognition. Srimaran Sri Vallabhan honoured one Etti Sattan with the title *Iruppaikkudi-Kilavan* who was a descendant of a poet who adorned the Sangaphalagai at Madurai.³⁴ One Sēnavaraiyar figured as an important officer in the 13th century records from Parantakanallur. Was he the same as the Senavariyar, commentator of *Tolkāppiam*?³⁵ The Dalavaypuram plates inform us that the father of the scribe was a Tamil poet named Pāndi-Tamilābharanan. The Tamil portion of this grant begins with the words ஒங்கு திரையியன் பரப்பில் which is also the opening line of the Sangam classic *Madurai Kānji* dedicated to Nedunjelijan. Some of the terms occurring in this copper plates are reminiscent of Periālvār's references to the Pandyas. For example, compare the epithet “கடல் கடைந்து அமிர்து கொண்டு of the plate with கடல் கடைந்து அமிர்தம் கொண்டு கலசத்தை நிறைத் தால் போல் of Periālvār. Similarly, Periālvār's reference to the Pandyas' greatness as “பருப்பதத்து கயல் பொறித்த பாண்டிய குலபதி போல்” is echoed in the inscriptions.

Colleges and Libraries:

Some evidences are available for the existence of some *Ghatikas* or colleges for higher learning. From literary sources we know that Madurai itself was a centre of learning just as Kanchi was. In South India, certain institutes called *Sālais* and *Ghatikas* served as places where pupils were imparted training not only in the ancient lore like the *Vedas* etc., but also certain military disciplines. The well known example was *Kāṇḍalūr-Sālai* in the Āy country, which was a sort of military training college besides imparting other academic studies. Similarly, at Parthipasekharapuram, there seems to have been another institute. In the inscriptions of early Pandyan kings, all important Chief Ministers like Māran Kāri, Māran Eyinin, Sāmantan Ganapati, Sāttan Sāttan were well versed in the military as well as literary and religious pursuits and most of them hailed from Karuvendapuram or Ugkarankottai. It is likely that there was one *Sālai* situated there. There was a College at Kanyakumari

34 334 of 1929-30.

35 *Ibid*, p. 78

named Srivallabha-perunjālai as an adjunct to the temple. It was evidently founded by a Pandyan king or his Ay feudatory. Later on, it was renamed as *Rājarājaperum Sālai* by Rajaraja I. Lands were endowed for the institution as *Sālabhogam*. There was provision for 50 Sattars to stay and study there. (E. I. XXVI, 37)

A record of Jatāvarman from Chingleput district mentions a *Ghatika* at Kāvanur in Sengāttu-Kōttam.³⁶

Library :

A record of Jatāvarman Sundara at Chidambaram speaks of a Saraswati-Bhandāram (library) its organisation and administration under the orders of a chief Pallavadaraiyar. The library was originally formed by a poet Svamideva and now it was expanded. A list of 20 scholars proficient in different branches of learning were employed to copy down in Sanskrit and Tamil and compare and check the manuscripts.³⁷

These data clearly show the interest evinced in those times to maintain libraries with facilities for copying important works. One of the works mentioned is *Siddhāntaratnākara* by Somesvara.

We have evidence for another Saraswati-Bhandāra in the temple at Sermadevi and the grant of land for the recitation of the *vedas* and *puranas* therein.

Mathas :

Next to temples, *mathas* or seminaries were centres of religion and learning. They belonged to different sects and affiliations and were recipients of gifts from kings and people. But mostly we get much information about Saivite *mathas*. A rather long epigraph of Māran Sundara II states that the king provided for the recitation of *Tirun-jānam* in the temple at Tirunelveli by as many as eleven *tapasvins*, who were the disciples of several important pontifical heads of *mathas* in South India.³⁸ They were :—

36 51 of 1932-33

37 ARE 1961-62

38 695 of 1916.

39 427 of 1929-30

1. Vishakanthadēva-Santāna ;
2. Bhattavira-Santāna ;
3. Tiruvārur-matha ;
4. Bhiksha-matha ;
5. Matha at Madurai ;
6. Alagianāyaka-Santan at Tirunelveli.

Representatives of all the *mathas* recited the *Tirujanānam* which was probably a sacred work of the Siva-siddhanta school.⁴⁰

At Tiruppattur, in the east street adjoining the temple, there was the *Bhiksha-matha*, presided over by Sarvesvara. This is mentioned in a record of Vira Pandya (A.D. 1281).⁴¹ The origin of this *matha* is not known but in later times its connection with pontiffs like Aghora Sivāchārya and Isāna Sivachārya suggest a possible connection with the Siva-Siddhantha teachers of the same name. The *Bhikshamatha* is also mentioned in a later record of the 16th century A.D. in association with Golaki-dharma. The disciples were in charge of some temples in South India including Pandyanadu.⁴²

At Aruviyur near Sivapurai (Tirunelveli district) a merchant constructed a *matha* during the time of Srivallabha.⁴³ At Tirupparankunram, there was the *Kilai-matha* for which Vikrama Pandya gave some grant.⁴⁴ At Tirunelveli in later half of the 13th century, during the reign of Maran Sundara II one Māmāṭṭi of the king constructed a *matha* called Seyyanampiratti-matha, after her own name. She was probably the queen of Hoysala Somēsvara who was the *mama* of the king. One Tamil Pallavarayar was the local chief.⁴⁵ At Tikkurungudi, there was *Kalaiyarkalan-tirumandapam* for which a tax-free land was given as *madappuram* during Jatavarman Sundara's period.⁴⁶ At Sākkottai (Ramanathapuram district), during the reign of the same king there was *matha* presided over by Bhavitchariyar Dakshinamurti for

40 Another reference to this work cf. 463 also.

41 173 of 1929-30, p. 82

42 178 of 1929-30 ;

43 1928-29, p. 68

44 248 of 1941-42.

45 298 of 1940-41;

46 407 of 1954-55

whom the assemblies of village and nadu gave lands as *Tirumadavilagam*.⁴⁷ At Madurai, there was one *Bhucanaikaviran-matha* for which a royal grant for feeding 1000 pilgrims at the rate of 100 daily, during festival days, was given.⁴⁸ At Sermadevi, we get some evidence for its association with Kashmir Saivites. Several natives from Kashmir-desam and Aryadesam figure in records.⁴⁹ At Kuttalam, *Pāsupata-makkal* were in charge of the temple.⁵⁰

Vaishnava-mathas :

In the 12th-14th century period, quite a few Sri-Vaishnava *mathas* came up in all important centres like Tirupati, Srirangam, Kānchi, presided over by ascetics called Jiyars. Some of them trace back their origin to the times of Ramanuja and some even earlier (e.g. Srirangam). The Jiyars were the custodians of worship and ritual in the temple. It was their duty to see that the *pūjas* were done in accordance with the code laid down by Ramanuja.

At Alagarkoil, there was a *matha* named Tirunādudaiyar-matha for feeding Tridandi-Sanyāsin and Ekāngi Sri Vaishnavas.⁵¹

There was also another *matha* named *Kulasekhara-matha* in the same temple for which land was given as royal grant.⁵²

At Tirukkurungudi, there was the *Tirumangai-matha* for the tridandi ascetics for which tax free land gift was made by a Pandyan king.⁵³

At Alvar-Tirunagari, there was the *Arulala-tādan-matha* to provide facilities for scholars. It is stated to have been founded by Tirukkurugur Mahāmuniḡal (Nammāḡvar) during the time of Maravarman Sundara (13th century).⁵⁴ The famous Vānamāmalai-matha came up much later i.e., after Manavala Mahamuni. But mathas

47 52 of 1946-47

48 278 of 1939-40

49 S. I. I. XIV, No. 197

50 *Ibid*, 66

51 277 of 1929-30

52 279

53 355 of 1959-60

54 523 of 1958-59.

listed above were of earlier period. The pontiffs of these *mathas* had their main object in regularising the worship and rituals in the temple in accordance with Sri Vaishnava tenets, of affording spiritual initiation and training to their disciples, in providing facilities of feeding etc., to the scholars and pilgrims on festive occasions. To that extent, they were doing social service besides ministering to the religious aspirations of the people. They were often centres of intellectual and literary pursuits. It was in the *mathas* at Srirangam that eminent scholars like Nampillai, Peria-vāchan-pillai, Manavala Mahamuni were nurtured.

Religion:

Jainism and Buddhism had their limited following in Pandyanadu from the Sangam age. The early caves with Brahmi inscriptions found in and around Madurai and other part of Tirunelveli and Ramanathapuram districts were probably the *pālis* of the Jain ascetics, who performed the Sallekhana fasting for 56 days and finally gave up life. We get a good number of names⁵⁵ of these ascetics such as:

1. *Kāniyananta āsiriya*: Occupied the monastery at Māngulam. Nedunchelian's officer and brother-in-law made gifts to this monastery.
2. Kavuti Iten : Sittannavassal.
3. Ariti of Elaiyan lived at Karungālakkuḍi
4. Nātan, lived in the dormitory at Kunrattur
5. Kāsapan, occupied the cave at Alagarkoil
6. Cenkāyapan, an ammanan from Yarrūr, lived in the cave at Pugalūr.
7. Cenkāyapan - occupied the cave at Tiruchi.
8. Cantiranti - did penance at Tirupparankunram.
9. Matavirai, the great nun living at Alagarkoil cave.
10. a nun of Sapamita ... at Alagarkoil cave.

All the above names suggest that they belonged to the Jaina faith which laid emphasis on renunciation, fasting etc. But Jainism received rude shock from the Hindu revivalist movement led by Āḷvars and Nāyan-

⁵⁵ I. Mahadevan, *op. cit.*

mars. All the *Tevaram* hymnists visited Pandyanādu and particularly Sambandar's influence on Ninrasir Nedumāran gave a fillip to Saivism. Similarly, among the Ālvars, Nammālvār and his disciple Madhura-kavi, Peria-ālvār and his daughter Āndāl were born in Pandyanādu and had a large hand in spreading the tenets of Vaishnavism. Nedunjadayan Parāntaka was a great devotee of Vishnu and his minister Madurakavi (probably Madura Kavi Alvar) excavated a stone cave temple for Narasimha at Anaimalai, in the same hill in which Jains had their resorts. This was symbolic of the triumph of Hinduism over the heterodox religions. An inscription of the 7th century recently discovered at Malayadikkuruchi by Sri K. R. Srinivasan makes a pointed reference to the conversion of a Jain cave temple into a Saiva one. According to him, temple-movement of Hinduism took two forms — either converting the existing Jain caves into Saiva ones or excavating new cave temples. The words used for conversion were *Tiruttivitta*, *pudukki* etc. Similarly, the inscription of 773 A. D. Tirupparankundram cave also seems to make a veiled reference to conversion of the existing Jain temple for the Saivite one. It states that Sattan Ganapati re-appropriated the cave “திருத்துவித்தது திருக் கோயிலும், பூதடாகமும்...”. The term “Tiruttivitta” has rightly been taken as “remodelled”, “corrected” “reformed” or “converted”.

All this would show that Jainism was fast losing its influence and Saivism and Vaishnavism were gaining the upper hand. But it continued to have a limited following among the certain sections like the merchant-class. Many Pandyan kings claim in their inscriptions that they gave numerous (*Enniranda Pallichandam*) endowments to Jain temples. In certain localities or pockets, Jainism continued to flourish with a limited following. A number of their resorts in Pandyanadu have Jain sculptures and inscriptions in Vatteluttu characters of 8th-9th century. A few examples are Anaimalai, Kazhugumalai, Aivarmalai, Samanarmalai, Karadippatti, Sittannavasal. All the 8th-10th century Jain settlements also gravitated towards the same areas or hills where the early Jain ascetics lived. The later resorts have *Vatteluttu* inscriptions written below the sculpture of Jain Tirthankara. The most famous Jain teacher was Ajjanandi. Probably, he is the same one who is referred to in the *Jivakachintāmani*. He is mentioned in the newly discovered *vatteluttu* inscription at Arittapatti and also at places at Eruvadi, Uttamapalayam etc.

Sittannavāsai: This was another Jain pocket which continued to flourish even in the mediaeval times. An inscription of 9th century found in one of the pillars of the cave refers to a Jain teacher of Madurai by name Ilam Gautaman (*Madurai-āsiriyaṇ*) made some renovations here. It was during the reign of Srimāra Sri Vallabha (815-862 A. D.)⁵⁶

Samanar hill: Near Madurai, was another Jain settlement about which we get some new evidence now. A Tamil inscription of 10th century near the Jain images mentions a *palli* and the ascetics Guna-bhadrādēva and Chandraprabha.⁵⁷ This *palli* continued to be there even later.

A Kannada record of the 12th century from the same place mentions the Jain teachers, one of whom was Bālachandradēva of Sravanabelagola who belonged to the Mūlasangha.⁵⁸ The connection of a Jain teacher of Sravanabelagola, the well known Jain centre of Karnataka with the ancient Jain centre at Samanarmalai near Madurai is of special interest. It mentions other ascetics like Nemidēva, Ajitasēnadēva, Gōvardhanadēva etc.

Tirunelveli district: A Jain temple Nyāyaparipāla-perumpaḷḷi in the Tidiyurmala at Pulam in Tirunelveli district is recorded. The hill was also called *Jinagirimalai*. There are some sculptures of Jain Tirthankaras. But later it seems to have been converted into Bhagavati temple.⁵⁹

Iruppaikudi (Ramanathapuram district):

In the 9th century one important chief of Srimara Sri Vallabha by name Iruppaikudi Kilavan built a Jain palli besides Siva and Vishnu temples.⁶⁰

While Jainism showed remarkable adjustability in facing the storm of Hindu revivalism, Buddhism practically succumbed to it. Particularly, the Pandyanādu, not a trace was to be found. But in

56 325 - 326 of 1960-61;

57 242 of 1950-51.

58 244 of 1950-51;

59 1939-40, Pt. II

60 1929-30, p. 71.

the Chola country places like Nāgapattinam, Bhūtamangalam, Kaveripumpattinam etc. there were atleast stray Buddhist colonies. There was the famous Sulāmani-vihāra or Rājarāja-perumpalli, established by the Sri Vijaya king and also patronised by Rājarāja. But his son Rajēndra was rather hostile to it. We do not hear much about it later.

Recently, in a Pandyan record of 15th century from Nagapattinam, we get some interesting data about this famous Buddhist colony. It records the gift of some lands belonging to Siva temple for the renovation (*Tiruppani*) of Rājarājaperumpalli *alias* SriMāhasvara-perumpalli.⁶¹ From this, it appears that the old Buddhist establishment had been converted into a Saivite one by this time. The other interpretation would be that some lands belonging to the Siva temple were gifted for the renovation of the ancient Buddha paḷli.

Apart from this, we hear next to nothing about Buddhism.

Saivism and Vaishnavism :

The patronage and encouragement given to those two wings of Hinduism by the Pandyan king hardly needs any emphasis. They extended the whole-hearted and impartial support to the Vedic religions from very early days. They had a long tradition as champions of Vedic religion. Even the Pandyas of the Sangam age claim the performance of yāgas (e.g. Palyāgasālai Mudukudumi Peruvaludi). When the Kalabras occupied Pandyanādu and disturbed the existing religious conditions, Hinduism received a set back. But again with the coming of Pandyas in the 6th-7th centuries, the Vedic religion regained its place of honour with added vigour. The Velvikkudi grant gives beautiful expression to this: "... வேள்விச் சாலை முன் நின்று வேள்விக் குடியெயன் நப்பதியைச் சீரோடு திருவனர் செய்தார். The Kalabras cancelled all concessions and land grants given to the Vedic people by the early Pandyas and the later Pandyan kings restored them to all their original donors. Not only this. In every grant they prided themselves in saying that they performed the Vedic rites like the *Asvamedha*, *Hiranyagarbha*, *Vājapēya* etc. This can be seen in Selian Sendan's Vaigai

61 290 of 1963-64 ; p. 26.

bed inscription also. Maravaram Sundara I gives expression to the same ideal in his *meykirtī* wherein he says that he encouraged

மூவகை தமிழ் முறைமையின் விளங்க
நால்வகை வேதமும் நவீன்றுடன் வளர
ஐவகை வேள்வியுஞ் செய்வினை யியற்ற
அறுவகைச்சமயமும் அழகுடன் திகழ
எழுவகைப் பாடலு மியலுடன் பரவ ...

This sums up their ideals and aspirations.

Their impartiality between Saivism and Vaishnavism is seen in all their copper plates which usually begin with the invocatory verses to Vishnu, and end with a tribute to Lord Siva. Particularly, among the early Pandyas there were both followers of Saivism and Vaishnavism. While Ninrasir Nedumāran was a Saivite, Nedunjadaya Parāntaka i.e., Varaguna I called himself *Parama Vaishnavavanum tādūgi*. Similarly, Srimāran Sri Vallabha, the contemporary of Periaḷvār was a Vaishnava while his son Varaguna II was a devout Saiva. His brother Parāntaka Vira Nārāyana was possibly a Vaishnava again. We get the impression that sectrarianism had no place in their conception of Hinduism. The lavish patronage to the temple of both denominations testify to their eclectic outlook. Even the tinge of fanaticism that was seen in some of the later Chola kings is not seen here. The later Pandyas of the Second empire were most of them Saivites but extended their patronage to all temples. Jatāvaraman Sundara's benefactions to Srirangam and Chidambaram are historic and are too well known. Minakshi Amman temple Madurai, Nellaiappar temple, Tirunelveli, Jambukesvaram at Tiruchi, Chidambaram temple among the Saivite temples; Srirangam, Alagarkōil Srivilliputtūr, Aḷvār Tirunagari among the Vaishnava temples, received ample patronage.

Their patronage took place in many ways; huge land grant, tax exemption, institution of *sandis*, renovation of existing temples and most important, construction of huge towers or gopuras and mandapas which remain to this day as magnificent monuments of Pandyan art. *Avanivēnda Rāman-Tirugōpuram* in the Minakshi temple, *Sundara Pāndya gōpuram* at Cidambaram, *Tirunirru gōpuram* at Jambukesvaram are outstanding examples.⁶² At Alagarakōil, Jatavarman Sundara

built a *mandapa* called *Kōyil pon-meinda-perumal-mandapa*.⁶³ At Srirangam, he built the *Sēranai-venrān-Tirumadapa*.⁶⁴ Kil-chitrai vidi in the same temple is called *Katiyugarāman tiruēdi*.⁶⁵ Sundara Pandyan's Tirumandapam at Minakshi temple.⁶⁶ A gopura of the same name is mentioned at the Vishnu temple at Srivaikuntam.⁶⁷ A number of *Sandis* or offerings on the birth days of the kings are known: At the Vishnu temple at Sivaramangai, Jatāvarman Kulasekhara instituted a service named *Kulasekhara-Sandi* on his birth star.

Avani-vēnda-Rāman-sandī in Minakshi temple instituted by Jatavarman Sundara II on his birth star Uttarattadi; Sundara I on his natal star Mula and Sundara III on his birth star Pushya.⁶⁸

Rājakkal-nāyan-Sandi performed at Vishnu temple Tiruvendipuram on Vaikasi-hasta, the birth-star of Māravarman Vikrama Pandya (Acc. 1283). He performed another on his coronation day Rohini and called it *Vikrama-Pandyan-Sandi*.⁶⁹

The Pandyan queens did not lag behind in this race for benefactions. We get a reference to *Ulagamuludaiyāl-Sandī* in the temple of Tiruvannāmalai (South Arcot) during the time of Vikrama Pandya (1283). Vira Pandya's queen gave valuable presents to Siva temple at Tiruvattiyur (in North Arcot) such as gold ornaments like the *pattam*, *Ganga* and the crescent to Natarāja in her own name.⁷⁰ Another form of encouragement was by setting up the images of the deity and also the saints like the Nayanmars and Alvars. In one of the more recently found inscriptions, we get a reference to the installation of the image of Tiruppurumturai-Aludaiyar in the temple of Tirukkodika.⁷¹ During Maravarman Sundara I's reign the image of saint Sundaramurti and his consort Paravai-Nāchiar were installed in the Siva temple at

63 ARE 1928-29, p. 69-70

64 28 of 1937-38

65 98 of 1936-37

66 285 of 1939-40

67 379 of 1959-60.

68 1958-56, p. 7-8

69 247 of 1955-56

70 252 253 of 1939-40, Also 177.

71 54 of 1930-31

Tentirupperai.⁷² In the Vishnu temple in the same place a mandapam *Jñānsamudram* in the name of the king was built and the image of Bhūmipirattiar was set up.⁷³ In the Siva temple the image of Tirukkamakōttattu-Āludīa Nāchiar was consecrated. At Sakkottai, the image of Tiruvīdi-nāchiar, probably the *utsava* image of Goddess was set up.⁷⁴ These instances may incidentally corroborate the view that separate shrines for the Goddess in all our temples was only a later development. Most of the ancient temples both Siva and Vishnu are called only after the presiding Lord. Even the famous Minakshi temple was known in *Tevaram* hymns and the inscriptions as Tiru-ālava-udaiyār temple.

In the Siva temple at Ariyur in Lalgudi, the image of Subrahmanya was set up by one Nachchinārkkuniyān of Dipangudi near Tiruvārur (in the reign of Jātavarman Sundara). From a record from the Vishnu temple at Nāngunēri, we infer that Saṭagōpa i.e., Nammālvār was already deified. At Alvār-Tirunagari also, the birth place of Nammālvār, the description refers to him as Tirukkurugūr-māmuni.⁷⁵ From the records of Srivilliputtūr temple, we come to know that Perīālvār and his foster daughter Āndāl were deified and their hymns *Tirupallāndu* and *Tiruppāvai* were recited. Āndāl is referred to as Sūdikkodutta Nāchiār. We get reference to the recitation of *Tiruvāymoṣi* also called as *Saṭagopanpāttu*. In fact a late Pandya record is completely composed of the words and phrases taken from *Tiruppāvai*.⁷⁶ The image of Emberumānar or Rāmānuja was set up at Srīvaikundam temple during the time of Mar. Kulasekhara (13th Cent). At Mannarkoil there was the *Nālāyiravan-tirumandapam* where *Tiruppāvai* was recited. A *dasar* from Kerala set up the shrine for Kulasekhara Alvar in the same place.⁷⁷

Recitation of some of the sacred works like *Tiruvempāvai*, *Tiruchāḷal*, *Tirunjānam* are mentioned in the 12th century records. A record

72 288 of 1940-41

73 284

74 55-56 of 1946-47; Amman Shrine founded at Sivapuri (69 of 1228-29).

75 21 of 1927; K. V. Raman, *Ep. Gleanings on Sri Vaishnava Achāryas*, Prof. Sastri, Fel. Vol. 1971.

76 379 of 1959-60.

77 397, 400 and 402 of 1916.

from Siva temple, Nanguneri dated in the reign of Māravarman Sundara I mentions the recitation of *Tiruvempāvai*.⁷⁸ In the reign of Sundara II in Minakshi temple provision was made for recitation of *Tiruvempāvai* in *Sādāriṭṭan* in Margali.⁷⁹ The identification of the work *Tiruchāḷal* mentioned in a record of A.D. 1135 in a Siva temple is not known.⁸⁰

Architecture and Art:

The monuments of the Pallava kings had engaged the attention of the scholars for a long time and now a fairly reliable account of the architectural evolution of the Pallava monuments is available to us.⁸¹ But some how the Pandyan monuments have not received adequate attention mainly because of the lack of dated inscriptions. For example, we have no record comparable to the famous Mandagapattu inscription of Mahendravarman clearly proclaiming the heralding of a new era of stone-architecture in Tamil nadu. Till recently, with the available data the earliest Pandyan cave temple could not be dated before A.D. 770 — the Narasimha cave temple at Anaimalai of Nedunchadayan Parāntaka I. But the discovery of the Sēndan's (A.D. 654-670) inscription dated in his 17th year at Malayadikkurichi pushed the date of rock architecture in Pandyanadu by nearly a century earlier. The date of the record is A.D. 671. But even this date is atleast 40 years behind the pionering work of Pallava Mahendravarman I. Nevertheless, it is an important land-mark in the history of Pandyas in more than one ways. Sri K. R. Srinivasan who discovered the inscription in 1957, had discussed the importance of it in one of his recent papers.⁸² According to him, this signifies the era of stone temples in Pandyanadu in the wake of the new Hindu renaissance movement that took place in Tamilnadu under the influence of the Alvars and Nayanmars. This is emphasised in the word Kaṭṭirukkōyil (கட்டுருக் கோயில்) that occurs in this record. We are already familiar with

78 ARE 1927-28 p. 56.

79 Ibid, p. 60.

80 1907, p. 76

81 K. R. Srinivasan, *Cave Temples of Pallavas*; *Ancient India* No. 14; K. V. Sundara Rajan's papers on Rajasimha Temples.

82 I am thankful to K. R. Srinivasan who has permitted me to consult his paper submitted to Pandyan Seminar, Madurai, 1971.

Mahendravarman's claim that he was the first to make temple out of stone for the Hindu Trinity. So, the significance of the word "Kal-tirukkōyil" in Sendan's record can be appreciated in this context. I would like to draw the attention of the scholars to another similar reference in the Anaimalai cave of Madura Kavi or Māran Kāri (A.D. 770). It refers to the temple as *Silāgraham* and *Kaṭṭali*, stone-house for Lord Vishnu. This temple movement went hand in hand with the Bhakti movement. The latter advocated the archa-form or image-worship and the temple-movement gave concrete expression to this idea in immortal stone. In the Pandyan country, in the first phase of this stone architecture, we have a series of *Kaṭṭalis* in the form of cave temples. To cite only a few examples :

Malayadikkurichi cave	(A.D. 670-71)
Anaimalai cave	(A.D. 770)
Tirupparankundram cave	(A.D. 773)
Aivarmalai cave	(A.D. 870)

the cave temples at Pillaiyarpatti,⁸³ Tirumayam, Tiruchendur, Kunrakkudi, Tirumalaipuram, Jain cave temple at Sittannavasal, the Subramanya cave temple at Kalugumalai; the Tirunandikarai cave in Kanyakumari district etc.⁸⁴

In fact, the cut-in cave temples of the Pandyan country far outnumbered those of the Pallava territory. But in point of time and style, there seems to be at least one generation gap between the two. In A.D. 670, the Malayadikkurichi cave was still in simple mandapa type of Mahendravarman style. By this time, Pallava Narasimhavarman had gone a step further in producing those beautiful caves with lion-based pillars and the *hara* of miniature shrines on the *prastara*, as at Mahabalipuram. But the Pandyan cave temples have their own individuality in the arrangement of shrines and deities within their cave. The lower rock-cave at Tiruchirapallai and Tirupparamkunram cave are outstanding examples where we have a full array of sculptures of Vishnu and Siva on either side face, and in the back wall the sculptures

83 I. Mahadevan and R. Nagaswami would, on the basis of palaeography of Pillaiyarpatti inscription date the cave to 5th 6th centuries *Contra* J. I. H. XLV p. 48.

84 H. Sarkar, *Manappadu cave, Damilica I.*

of Ganapati, Durga, Subrahmanya and sometimes Jyestha are portrayed.

The next stage in the temple-evolution viz., the cut out temples or rathas, so very popular at Mahabalipuram was almost not gone through by the Pandyas. We have only one solitary example of a *ratha* viz., the Kalugumalai Vettuvān kōil. But the mode adopted is different from that of the Pallavas. Here, the hill temple stands in the middle of a trench, cut out on all sides from the hill. This process of entrenching and cutting out the temple was not practised by the Pallavas but we have examples at Ellora.

Structural temples:

Structural temples were fast becoming the order of the day in Tondaimandalam and also the Chola territory. The Pandyas did not go through the ordeal of cutting out rathas. A number of beautiful structural temples came up quickly and the Pandyas took the tide on its crest. There are references to the conversion of brick temples into stone ones. From 9th century onwards, a series of medium sized stone temples were built both by the Pandys and that Muttarayans. Some of outstanding examples are: Vatapatrasāyi temple, Srivilliputtur; Varagunīśvara temple, Radhapuram; Siva temple at Ambasamudram; Tiruttalisvara temple, Tirupattur; the Vijayanārāyan temple, Nanguneri; Tiruvālisvaram temple, Erichchavudaiyar and Tirumulanathaswami temples at Ambasamudram, Lakshminarayana temple Sinnamanur, Tirunārayana-vinnagar temple at Attur etc. Some of the earliest temples have undergone renovation in later times. But some are intact. The Alagarkoil sung by Periālvār Andal and Nammalvar has evidently been renovated later. Its sanctum has a peculiar elliptical shape.

The apsidal temples so popular in Tondimandalam in the Pallava and Chola days, was almost non-existent in Pandyanadu. This would show that it was essentially an influence from Andhra and Deccan which did not influence the Pandyan country. On the other hand, they practised and experimented with the other peculiar type of vimanas popularly called the *ashtāṅga-vimāna*, akin to the Vaikuntaperumal temple at Kanchi and the Uttiramerur temple. We have two good temples in Pandya nadu — one the Saumyanarayana temple at

Tirukoshtiyur and another the Kūdal-alagar temple at Madurai. The latter seems to have been renovated in the Nayak days.

The early structural temples were of modest size but possess good finish and restrained beauty. It has been pointed out by K. V. Soundara Rajan that in extracting granite blocks and building temples out of them, the Pandyas were ahead of the Pallavas who were only working with soft rock, sandstone. All early structural temples of the Pallavas were in sandstone whereas the Pandyas showed their mettle on a tough rock. This tradition, they carried on further in Subsequent times.

Later Phase:

During the Chola ascendancy in the Pandyan territory, a number of temples were built which act as links between the first and the second phase of the Pandyan rules. The kings of the Second Pandyan Empire gave importance to the outer *gopuras*, the *prākaras* and the *mandapas*. With them, a new epoch of constructing huge temple complexes on a grand scale started. The existing ancient temples underwent amplification and expansion. Outstanding examples: Minakshi Amman temple, Madurai; Nellaiappar temple, Tirunelveli; the temple at Tenkasi etc. The eastern tower of Sundaresvara shrine was built by Avanivēnda-Rāman and the Melagopuram by Jatavarman Parakrama-Pandya (14th century). Mar. Kulasekhara I constructed the long corridor (*Tiruchchurrur-maligai*) around the main shrine at Tirunelveli.

With the tremendous expansion of Pandyan hegemony spreading over the whole of Tamilnadu, Pandyan architectural activities crossed the traditional boundaries and over-flowed into the Chola mandalam and Tondaimandalam. Thus, came up the Pandyan *gopuras* at Jambukesvaram, Srirangam, Chidambaram and Tiruvannamalai.

We can also say that the practice of preparing tall multi-faceted pillars having life-size sculptures was also a Pandyan contribution, which the Vijayanagar and the Nayaka artisans adopted and developed. Such an example is found at Nellaiappar temple, Tirunelveli and also at Tenkasi and Alagarkoil.

Beautiful examples of early Pandyan sculpture can be seen at the Tirupparanukunram cave with Vishnu, Durga, Jyeshtha, Ganesa and the

beautiful Nataraja at Narasimha panels and also at Subrahmanya cave at Anaimalai and the Vishnu temple at Tiruttangal. The Vettuvan Koil Sculptures are masterpieces of Pandyan art. They are bold and majestic and at the same time possess natural beauty.

Bronzes :

Not much attention has been paid to the bronzes of the Pandyan country. But quite a few marvellous pieces like those of Sri Rama group at Kūdal-Alagarikoil, Madurai, are of great beauty ; similarly are the deities at Tirumohur, Alvar Tirunagari, Srivankuntam etc. Much work is called for in this field.

Paintings :

The Jain paintings at Sittannavasal may more justifiably be called Pandyan and were probably done during the time of Srimaran Sri Vallabha (9th century), when some renovations were done to the cave by Ilam Gautaman, the Jain teacher.

The caves at Tirumalaipuram and Tirunandikkarai in Kanyakumari district retain some Pandyan paintings. All the Jain sculptures of mediaeval times like those at Anaimalai, Alagar-malai, Kilavalavu etc., were once fully painted. Now, some traces of green and red colour are alone visible. Recently, similar paintings were noticed on the Jain image at Arittapatti. A systematic search aided by colour photography of the existing vestiges of paintings would be useful.

Conclusion :

Thus, the contributions of the Pandyas constitute an important chapter in the annals of South Indian art and architecture. Not only in the quantity of output but also in the intrinsic qualities of beauty and magnificence, the Pandyan monuments stand out as great land-marks recalling to our minds the long and arduous vicissitudes through which the art tradition and art-impulses of the Tamils passed from age to age and reached the acme of glory during the middle of the 13th century A.D. In the realm of sculptural art and paintings too they have left behind a rich legacy which formed the base and source of inspiration for the Vijayanagar and Nayak artists.

APPENDIX

1. *Brahmi Inscription Mentioning Nedunchalian, Māngulam, Madurai Dist.*

கணிய் நந்த அஸிரிய் இருவன்கெ தம்மம்
இத்த நெடுஞ்சழியன் பணஅன் கடலஅன்
வழுத்திய் கொட்டுபீத்த பாஸிய்

Kaṇi — y — nanta āsiriya — ik — uv — aṇ kē dhamman
itta — a netūñcaḷiyaṇ paṇa — an Kaṭalan
valutti — y Kottūpitta — a — pāḷi — iy

Translation :

Dedication (dhammam) to Kaṇi — y nanta, to the monk (asiriya), (living) yonder (uvan)

This monastery (pāḷi — iy) was caused to be given (by) Katalan
Valutti — y (an) officer (or servant) (under) Neduncaḷiyaṇ¹

2. *Ariṭṭapatti Inscription (Madurai District).*

நெல்வேலிய் சழிவன் அதனன்
வெளியன் முழகை கொடுவன்

Translation :

Chajivan Atanan Velian of Nelveli gave (or offered) the Cave.²

1 I. Mahadevan, *Corpus of Tamil Inscriptions* (1968)

2 K. V. Raman and Y. Subbarayalu, *A New Tamil Brahmi Inscription*, J. I. H. XLIX (1971) The reading has been revised here in the light of a closer examination of the record recently.

3. *Pandya Chendan's 50th year inscription at Madurai*¹

பாண்ட்ய குலமணி ப்ரதீபனாய் ப்ராதூர்ப்ர வஞ்செ
ய்து விக்ரமங்களாலரைசடக்கி மறங்

கெடுத்தறம் பெருக்கி அக்ரஹாரம் பல

செய்த பரிமிதமாகிய ஹிரண்யகர்ப் கோ

ஸஹஸ்ர துலாபாரத்து மஹாதா நங்களரற்

கலி கடித்து மங்கலபுரந் நகரமாக்கி வீ

ற்றிருந்து செங்கோ[ன]டாவி நின்ற கோச்சே-

ந்தன் மற்றைம்பதாவது ராஜ்ய ஸம்வத்ஸர

ஞ் செல்லா நிற்க வைகை சொன் மதகு ப-

டுத்தரி கேஸரியானெனப் பியரிட்டு கா ரெடு-

வித்து காலுத்தை ஓடை அடைத்து.

ழ்நாடு பருத்திக்கு[டி] *****

4. *Peria-ōḷvar's hymn on Alagar-koil :*

மன்னர்மறுக மைத்துனன்மார்க்கொரு தேரின் மேல்

முன்னங்கு நின்று மோழையெழுவித்தவன் மலை

கொன்னவில் கூர்வேற்கோன் நெடுமாதன் தென்கூடற்கோன்

தென்னன் கொண்டாடுத் தென்றிருமாலினுஞ் சோலையே.

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1. K. G. Krishnan, *Madurai Inscription of Pandya Chendan*, EP. Ind. XXXVIII.

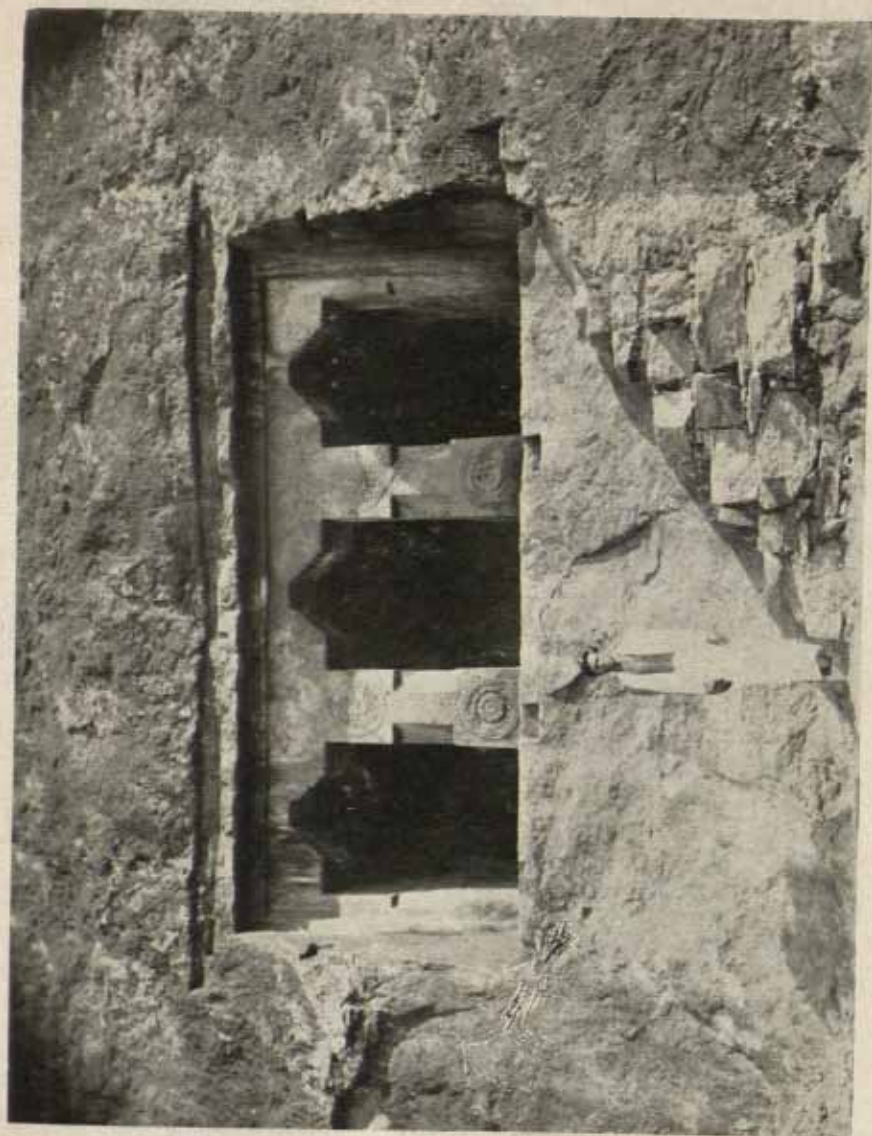


PLATE I: Rock-cut Cave, Tirumalaipuram, Tirunelveli District.



PLATE II: Lower Rock-cut Cave with sculptures, Tiruchirappalli.



PLATE III: A portion of the cut-out temple, Kazhugumalai, Tirunelveli District.



PLATE IV: Siva temple, Sinnamanur, Madurai District.



PLATE V: Pandyan sculptures, Tirupparankunram, Madurai District.



PLATE VI-A: Pandyan Paintings, Sittannayasal, Tiruchirapalli District.



PLATE VI-B: Some Early Pandyan Coins.

Photographs: By Courtesy of A. S. I.

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